

Desiderium

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Desiderium

by [GoldiesFlag](#)

Summary

As always, Ranboo wanted to not feel anything. He wanted death to swarm his brain, and pick him apart but be numb to it all. If only he could have a death so peaceful.

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OR

Ranboo is alone, pretending he isn't a child and paying for his rent and medication. Spoiler, he DIES. Bench trio ghost hunters to the rescue. Get ready for humor and angst.

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

What do you mean my heart problem can kill me if I don't take my medication?

Chapter Notes

TW: vomiting, mentions of child neglect, description of a dead body

Ranboo never felt *lonely*. Or he didn't think so at the very least. It was hard to distinguish anything about the word when he'd never experienced anything but being on his lonesome. He'd been independent since his first steps. To a certain point, he felt *pride*. He was proud that he'd made it this far by himself, especially when he learnt that other children didn't have to do what he did. They never had to rummage through the trash in their own home, or get a job as early as he did. He knew how paychecks worked before anyone else.

And yet, his chest always tightened a tiny bit when the children he passed on the street were holding onto their parents hand, and they didn't even *try* to pull away, but seemed to hold tighter. How could someone miss something they'd never had?

Ranboo hated how jealousy wrapped its way around his mind. The bright, shiny new jackets the children around him had, and most likely never had to work for, made that sinful feeling spark. *They* didn't need to work for affection. *They* didn't know how to count *coins* yet, let alone put in any work that required getting such clothing-

-That's *selfish*. He didn't have those things simply because... because he didn't deserve them? He certainly didn't feel like he did.

Ranboo didn't deserve a lot of things, yet here he was. Having run away from home, gotten a fake ID and job, days away from his aunt. He guessed it was a good thing that he did, because she didn't search too much. He remembered seeing his face on the news on a cafe television, but it didn't last long. Still, he wore a face mask and sunglasses a lot of the time, simply because he would rather hide forever than return back to that house.

It wasn't all bad though. He didn't *hate* his job. In fact, it was probably one of the best he could actually get. It was just a convenience store. He had a couple coworkers, but the only one he ever saw or worked with was nice, and sometimes brought him food. And with Ranboo's money problems, that was greatly appreciated. The only reason he didn't exactly enjoy his job was that his own health issues got in the way.

He was getting worse. He was tired, and couldn't afford his medicine anymore. He knew that if he told Karl, the older man would waste no time helping, but Ranboo could take care of himself. Karl didn't need to waste his money on him. Who died of a little lack of heart medication anyway? Even so, it was beginning to worry him. He was tired a lot of the time, and his chest felt painfully tight. Bruises were formed easily, simply from bumping into a table or wall.

It was fine. It had to be fine. Of course he was okay. It wouldn't cause any more problems than that. He could get through it, just like he always did.

Ranboo forced himself to stay awake, squinting his eyes at the clock. 8:58. Karl would be here soon, and Ranboo could go home and sleep. Just a bit longer.

He used to enjoy this job a lot more than he did now. It was something that took his mind off of things, but now, with his life slowly going downhill, it was difficult to enjoy anything. Even the walks from work to his apartment stressed him out. Exhaustion crept around him, making him fear of passing out on the streets. That wouldn't be the first time he'd passed out either, so it wasn't all that crazy of a thought. Karl had had a heart attack when Ranboo collapsed mid sentence.

The bell rang, alerting him back from his doze. Karl wore a simple thin coat, similar to Ranboo's own but less faded, over his red uniform. It reminded him that winter would be here soon. Maybe he could pull enough money together to get a thicker jacket this year?

"You okay, man?" Karl tried to hide a grimace. Ranboo had to agree that he didn't look the best. Large and obvious bags were under eyes, unbrushed hair, skinny. And he must've looked worse than the last time Karl saw him, which was a few days ago, because the man looked surprised.

“Yeah I’m fine.” Ranboo said anyway, ignoring Karl’s pitiful look. His coworker simply nodded, setting down his things and allowing Ranboo to step out from behind the counter so he could get in.

“Are you sure?” Karl asked, keeping Ranboo from bolting out of the door. “You know you can ask for help if you need it, right?”

God that was tempting. He was really thinking about taking that offer. How easy would it be to just tell Karl everything? Tell him all that was hurting him and then let Karl take the reins to just make it *stop* .

But Karl was better than this. He didn’t deserve to have everything put on him. It was Ranboo who got himself in this mess, so he should be the one to deal with it like the adult he was. Or at least the adult he was supposed to act like. He wasn’t actually 18, but was 16; Ranboo had never felt like a child anyway.

“I’m fine, Karl.” Ranboo responded as genuinely as he could. He rubbed the back of his neck, trying to gather himself before exhaustion got the better of him. “I just need more sleep.”

“Okay..” Ranboo took that as his time to leave, before Karl continued once more, stopping Ranboo with his hand on the door. “You wanna meet up tomorrow? Since it’ll be Saturday? We could go down to that new cafe. On me.”

Ranboo smiled. Karl was a good person, and a good friend. Ranboo didn’t exactly think deserved that, but if Karl was offering to get him food, he wouldn’t pass it up. Especially on his only day off.

So he agreed. His heart was a little lighter as he made his way through L’manburg streets. The streetlights lit only small portions of the sidewalks. Ranboo was a tall kid. He didn’t exactly think he was in danger of being kidnapped, but he still found himself walking a little bit faster through the darkness.

L'manburg was pretty in the daytime. This side of the town anyways. Although this was the worn down side of town, he thought it was prettier than the richer side. Its cracked sidewalks and faded buildings gave off a kind of feeling that Ranboo loved. The thought of old and antique things, ghost stories told by cousins, dust collecting on a book with no title.

He'd only been to the richer side of town a few times, and that was enough. If you asked Ranboo, it was the people who made a town great. People down there were silent, and ignored everything and everyone. No one spoke unless it was an argument. They were wealthier, but at what cost?

Ranboo could feel his vision begin to blur, so he sped up his steps. He could pass out once he was in his apartment.

He couldn't remember stepping through the door, but he was now leaning over the toilet, vomiting whatever food he'd had. Nausea hit him overwhelmingly.

Ranboo steadied his breathing, clutching the sides of his waist in a halfhearted self hug. His chest squeezed and stung. He wanted to make it stop. He wanted so desperately for this to be over. When had his life become so messy? It was always walking on eggshells and pushing through discomfort.

He stood before he truly felt like he could, stumbling his way out of the bathroom. Standing in the doorway, he collected himself while glancing over his pathetic excuse for a home. There were only two rooms. The bathroom, and everything else. His 'kitchen' was just a mini fridge in the corner. His 'bedroom' was a sleeping bag he'd brought from his aunt's house before he left. That was all he technically *needed*, but he hoped to have more soon.

If he worked longer hours, which he technically could with his fake ID, he could maybe be able to get a bit more..

His chest tightened again. He groaned out of more annoyance than anything, clutching at his chest. Ranboo forced himself to walk past his fridge, knowing there wasn't anything in there anyway, and sat on his sleeping bag.

He was cold, but the motivation to slip inside the dulled blue bag wasn't there. He laid, closing his eyes. The noises of his apartment filled his ears, though it didn't bother him anymore. The creak of the bed in the room above him, the drip of a loose water pipe somewhere. The sounds lulled him to sleep despite his chest tightening more than usual.

As always, Ranboo wanted to not feel *anything*. He wanted death to swarm his brain, and pick him apart but be numb to it all. If only he could have a death so peaceful.

Ranboo woke up feeling a bit... less shitty than normal.. Well, not *completely* great. He didn't feel pain, but it was strange to say he didn't feel *anything* . Usually his chest ached in the morning, and he was always cold in autumn from the lack of heating. Even the sleeping bag under him felt of nothing. He wasn't sure if it were better or worse. Was this what he meant by not feeling anything?

He sat up, rubbing his eyes. This is weird, a bad weird. He didn't feel tired, but he also didn't feel energized. Just a void of nothing where he was so used to pain.

Ranboo stood, and found that standing was a lot easier now. He felt as though gravity meant nothing. His feet moved through the air as if nothing were weighing him down. Maybe this empty feeling would leave after a shower?

He walked through the already open door, moving to turn the water on, but-

His hand went through the shower knob.

What?

One hand turned to two as he struggled to lay it on the knob. Was he crazy? Why couldn't he touch it? No matter how many times he swiped his palm, it never touched the cool metal.

Okay. That's fine.

He was just tired. (Even though he didn't feel it). Ranboo took a step back, ignoring how he now noticed that air didn't seem to fill his lungs.

It was *fine* though. Maybe the sink would work?

Ranboo turned around, reaching for the handles, but the mirror-

Ranboo screamed. His reflection wasn't *there*. *He* wasn't there. His back was to the wall, and he had to catch himself before he fell through it.

He curled up on the ground, his eyes avoiding the mirror like the plague. Shit shit shit. This was a dream, right? It had to be a dream. That wasn't possible.

Without standing, Ranboo crawled out of the bathroom. No way was he about to look at his reflectionless mirror. Maybe there were cameras somewhere? Someone was pranking him.

He frantically scanned the room, but instead of a camera, his eyes landed on something very different. Laying on the same faded blue sleeping bag he'd slept in for months, was *him*. In the same red convenience store uniform, the same dark eyebags, and dull stringy brown hair.

Ranboo got to his feet, edging closer to the body. It looked.. peaceful, though he were anything but.

He couldn't feel. He wasn't cold nor hot. He didn't feel pain. He didn't feel tired. But he *did* feel scared.

Ranboo was dead.

“TOMMY WATSON, HURRY THE FUCK UP!” Tubbo was already down the block. Tommy grinned, pushing himself to move faster. His hands gripped tightly around his red backpack, stopping the expensive items inside from moving too much.

“I’M COMIN!” He yelled out, before mumbling, “bitch.”

If Tubbo heard, he didn’t comment. The only sounds were of the two huffing for air and their footsteps on the sidewalk as they sprinted through the town.

They were heading for a building. An abandoned storage building to be exact. What it once held, they had no clue. The only thing they were told by Tommy’s brother, Techno, was that it was an old, beat up building on the ‘poor’ side of town. And what did you get with creepy old abandoned buildings?

“Do you really think there will be ghosts?” Tubbo choked out when they started walking again, gasping for air.

“Spirits, Tubs. And *yes*. ” Tommy tried to pretend he didn’t have to gasp for air, but his red face gave him away. How embarrassing. “Once we finally get proof of a spirit, and I’m talkin BIG proof, like undeniable proof, that *we* found one? We’ll be ROLLIN IN CASH MY BOY!!” He swung an arm around Tubbo, who’s grin matched his own.

“I think I’m more excited about talking to it though.” Tubbo’s expression was thoughtful.

“We aren’t here to make friends, big man.”

“We’ll maybe *you* aren’t.” Tubbo playfully pushed Tommy away. “Imagine how fucking cool it’d be to have a ghost friend. They could play pranks on people you hate and they’d *never* know it was you.”

“who are you thinking about pranking?”

“Nobody.” Tubbo's smile was slightly more unnerving than usual.

The storage building, which was more of a large shed, didn't look how he imagined it to. He'd expected it to be made out of some kind of stone or marble, but it was wooden, and rotting. They'd have to be careful when going in. They'd have to be quick as well though, since the sun was going down, and fast. Phil would probably freak out if he was too late.

After a failed attempt to push it open, Tommy took a running start and slammed his shoulder into it, sending the door flying open. He ignored how it made his shoulder ache when Tubbo cheered from behind him.

The opening of the door sent dust flying. Tommy and Tubbo coughed and sneezed, waiting for the dust to settle before moving inside.

It was rotting just as much from the inside as the outside. Wooden floors crumbled under their feet, making the two boys careful of where to step. Equally rotting wooden support beams stuck out around the building, barely holding it up. Somewhere on the floor, there was a suspicious rust brown stain. This was definitely the kind of place ghosts would be at.

“You have the EMF?” Tubbo glanced at Tommy's bag. He nodded, crouching carefully so as to not put a nail through his knee, and searched through the red bag until he pulled out the EMF reader. They didn't have much, but the EMF reader was the only thing Techno had bought him for Christmas one year. It was the best one his older brother could've found, and it was *beautiful*. He was never so careful with anything in his life before.

They had flashlights and barely functioning cameras, movement detectors and crosses, but the EMF reader was *special*. If a ghost was nearby, it was supposed to change light colors depending on levels, the highest being red. Of course, they hadn't *found* a ghost just yet, but when they did it would be *amazing*.

He held out the little device to Tubbo, who took it carefully. He could hear the little thing beep as he dug through the bottom of the bag, pulling out his worn down and half broken

camera.

When he was almost ready to stand back up, the beeping changed to a higher pitch. Tommy froze. His eyes met the side of Tubbo's face which was illuminated in a bright yellow.

Yellow clicked to orange, then to a crimson red. Tubbo's eyes were wide as his head turned to meet Tommy's.

The door swung open with a bang. Tommy screamed.

Dream is a bitch and I'm a ghost oOoOOOOOo

Chapter Summary

Meet the Dream Team! Also more Ranboo stuff obv. Please read notes.

Chapter Notes

Hello hello. Im sure you've heard this speech a million times, but you know the news. I'm grieving as well, and it's OKAY to grieve for someone you've never met, and it is OKAY to continue drawing, writing, and talking about Techno and his character.

He deserves to be loved just as he was in life. If it is too painful for you to read or write about him at the moment, that is OKAY. Take your time; you can start up again whenever you feel like it, even if you never do. I love you all.

Im posting this chapter to help those who use fanfiction as an escape and comfort. I will continue writing about Technoblade's character, because I love and will forever miss him. Please, everyone, stay safe, drink water, and take your time. Love you all.

TW: description of a dead body

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Tommy screamed, latching onto Tubbos leg who was frozen. For a split second, he thought he was going to die. A poltergeist was going to come down on top of them and take their souls to hell.

An annoying laugh caught him off guard. It wasn't a scary ghost laugh, it almost sounded like-

"DREAM, YOU BITCH!" Tommy gave Dream an unkind hand gesture.

"I'm sorry-" Tommy could tell that Dream was not sorry by the way he continued to laugh hysterically. "-You were just so scared and screamed like a baby. That's hilarious."

“Oh, fuck off.” Tommy stood, dusting the dirt from his pants. Sapnap and George walked in, holding tools looking *way* better than what Tommy and Tubbo had.

Tommy used to respect them. He used to look up to them. The Dream Ghost Hunting team. They had proof of many ghosts and spirits (though they were all doubted amongst the ghost hunting community). And Tommy used to *like* them. Now, with their frequent run-ins, he knew they were just a bunch of assholes who can’t get a normal job like real adults.

“What are you doing here?” Tubbo asked. The smart fuck.

“Doing our job.” Dream replied, not bothering to look at either of the boys as he helped George set up what looked like a camera.

“Hey wait no-“ Tommy took a step towards Dream, but stopped once he man’s creepy ass smiley mask turned to face him (why did he have that?). “-We were here first. Go find another abandoned storage house!”

“And what are you going to actually find with your piece of shit equipment?” Tommy was silent. “You probably couldn’t find your glasses if they were on your face, let alone a spirit.”

“Dream, we were here first!”

“Yeah, you know the rules. We found a ghost first, it’s ours.” Tubbo crossed his arms, puffing his cheeks. The EMF he was carrying flicked on, eluminating the red light and beep once again before turning off.

“You found a ghost with that crappy equipment?” Dream laughed.

“Does that still have the tag on it?” George squinted. Tubbo looked down, ripping the tag off like it was never on it in the first place.

“Did you get that at a grocery store??” Dream practically cackled, leaning a hand on Sapraps

shoulder who looked less than amused. “Those pieces of shit don’t work! It’s a fake.”

“We didn’t get it from a goddamn grocery store, *Dream*.” He spat. “We’re hunters, just like you. Gain some fucking respect, or at least a bit of dignity. Would do you some good.”

“Tommy, you. Are. Not. A. Ghost. Hunter.” Dream’s mask was inches from his face, but he stood his ground anyway. “Fuck off, and go eat a chocolate bar or something.” Dream gave Tommy a nudge that was a bit too hard, almost sending him to the ground. Tubbo stepped between the two.

Tommy was fuming, but left anyway, since Tubbo was already leading him out. He did catch Tubbo kicking a pebble which landed directly on Dream’s mask, though it didn’t faze him. Even with the mask, he looked more annoyed than anything.

“What an absolute *bitch*.” Tubbo had his arms crossed. “He’s not the only ghost hunter in the world. He’s not even near the best.” Tommy was quiet. And Tommy was *never* quiet. Unless, of course, he was asleep, listening to music, or angry out of his mind.

What gave Dream the right to be such an asshole? He was older, sure, but what did that mean? It meant he’d die before Tommy did most likely, and Tommy would get to bully his ghost for all eternity. Other than being older, Dream was more experienced. And he had reputation on his side, which Tommy and Tubbo did not.

“hey.” Tubbo whispered, nudging Tommy’s shoulder. “I got a good smell, and I think Dream uses cotton candy perfume.”

“No fucking way.” Tommy couldn’t help but laugh along with his friend.

“Yes! My mom uses the same kind!”

“Dream smells like your *mother*.”

Both of them giggle, pushing each other off of the other as they throw joke after joke about Dream. This was why Tommy was glad Tubbo was his friend. The kid knew *exactly* what to say to make things feel better, even if it were just for a little bit.

“If I see their faces again, I will smack them *so hard*. ” Tommy said with a scowl, clenching his fists. Almost as if god himself hated Tommy’s guts, loud footsteps were coming from behind them.

Of course , when they turned, it was Sapnap. Tubbo instinctively grabbed one of Tommy’s hands to keep it from smacking the older man.

“What the fuck do you want?!” Tommy wasn’t actually going to smack him, but then again... it would feel nice..

“Hey guys, sorry about him.” Sapnap only took a few seconds to get his breath back. “I wanted to make sure you guys were alright.”

“We are *fine* .” Tommy lifted his head just to be able to look down at Sapnap. “You may *leave* now.” He was beginning to turn away to make his point, but Sapraps hand grabbed his wrist. “Woah woah woah hey-“

“ *And*, I wanted to give you this.” Sapnap pulled something out of his pocket, slipping it into Tommy’s hand.

“Wow... great cube..” A black cube, just a bit bigger than a Rubik’s cube, sat in his palm. It was metallic, and shiny. There were purposeful cracks in the side, which looked like it could open up, but there didn’t seem to be a button or switch on it of any kind. He squinted at it warily.

“OH MY- TOMMY!!” Tubbo grabbed it, pulling it comically close to his face. “DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS??!”

“A useless Rubik’s cube.”

“NO!” Tubbo’s eyes lit up, looking towards Sapnap graciously. “It’s a GHOST CUBE!!”

“a what.”

“A Ghost Cube.” Sapnap repeated. “Look, I have to get back but you guys keep that. *Don’t* let Dream know I gave it to you, yeah?” Tubbo nodded fast, letting Sapnap bolt away in a hurry to get back. Was Sapnap worried about Dream? If he was that worried about what Dream would think, why stay his friend? It must’ve been some weird kind of relationship that Tommy couldn’t understand. He’d seen people like Sapnap before, kind, but friends with people not so kind. They stuck together for the sake of friendship, and could get along easily together, but one always had to be a dick to everyone else. Just leave the man, Sapnap!

Tubbo explained what a Ghost Cube was to Tommy as they walked home.

“A ghost cube is the most expensive and rare item in the ghost hunting world!!”

“Like a spirit box?” Tommy thought about what his next birthday gift would hopefully be. A spirit box would let them *communicate* with a ghost; actually be able to talk outloud. But maybe this Ghost Cube thing would too? Maybe he wouldn’t need a spirit box after all.

“No! It’s not a spirit box. Think Ghostbusters. We can *take ghosts around in this thing* .”

“Like a ghost pokeball?!”

“LIKE A GHOST POKEBALL!”

“And it.. works? Sapnap could just be pulling our leg. Why would he give *us* such an expensive thing?”

“Cuz he pities us?” Tubbo shrugged. “I can check if it’s the real deal back at home. I used to be *obsessed* with these things.” Tubbo looked over the cube, admiring it.

“Well, shoot me a text when you find out?” Tommy asked once they reached his house.

“Of course!”

They parted ways, and Tommy went to his own front door. His stomach twisted with anticipation. Would the cube be real? Would they be able to *take a ghost home*? Maybe Tubbo’s idea of a ghost friend wouldn’t be that far away. Maybe Tommy’s dream of being rich and famous wouldn’t be either.

The door opened, letting out the sounds of his family. They were crowded in the kitchen, Phil working on plating dinner.

“And then I told him to fuck off-“

“Wil, you can’t just tell everyone you hate to fuck off.”

“Dad, they were being-”

“Tommy! Great timing! Come eat.” Phil put a finger to Wil’s face, turning his head towards his youngest son. He picked up two plates, setting one in Tommy’s seat at the dinner table.

“Anything cool happen today?” Phil asked once they were all seated. Tommy to his right, Wilbur to his left, and Techno just in front of him. Wil still gave him a sharp glare at the sudden change of conversation.

“Catch any ghosts yet?” Wilbur didn’t look up from his plate.

“We don’t *catch* the ghosts, dipshit.” Though they *could* if that ghost cube was legit..

“Fine. Did you *find* any ghosts?” Wilbur mocked.

“Don’t put others down just because you’re depressed, Wil.” Tommy took a bite out of his meatloaf.

“Haha.” Wilbur faked. “Yes, I’m depressed because I don’t believe in ghosts.”

“Wil, don’t dis the spirits.” Techno barely glanced up from his plate. Tommy grinned. Techno always had his back, at least when it came to him ghost hunting. For some reason, that was the one thing Techno *would* talk to him about. His older brother was always so stoic, but turned very talkative when the spirits were mentioned.

“Until I get some proof, I can’t believe it; I’m sorry.” Wil shrugged, casting Techno a hurt glare that Tommy didn’t understand.

“Alright, don’t put Tommy’s beliefs down at the dinner table.” Great input, Philza.

“One day you’re gonna get in some trouble though.”

“Nahh.” Techno disagreed. “I pointed them to a safer side of town.”

“*Safer?* In south L’manburg?” Wilbur raised an eyebrow. “I’m surprised you haven’t gotten murdered or something-”

“Alright! How’s the meatloaf? Too burnt?” Phil quickly changed topics.

Tommy didn’t care to listen as the conversation changed from meatloaf back to Wilbur’s awful friends. Wilbur’s life was boring anyways. All his friends were assholes. Wilbur never approved of Tommy’s ghost hunting. He despised it, much more than an older brother should hate their siblings interest. It was to a point Tommy thought it was personal. At least Techno

was there for him when it came to the spirits. He wished that he'd come with him sometime, though he always refused.

Tommy continued ignoring them, as he was much more interested when his phone notification went off. He struggled to slide it out of his pocket, ignoring the intrigued glances he got from his family.

It was from Tubbo.

'It's 100% legit.'

His heart skipped a beat.

'And you're sure we're not being tricked?'

'Bigman, you can't fake these.'

Tommy's grin probably freaked out his family, but he didn't care. He quickly excused himself, rushing back to his room to make plans with Tubbo.

Time to catch a ghost.

—

Ranboo waited for god knows how long, just staring at his body from the corner. It freaked him out, but he was still trying to convince himself that he wasn't dead. That this was some joke. It only truly set in when he got close, trying to touch it, pull it, *something*.

But his hand only faded through. In fact, if he squinted, he could see that his hands were slightly transparent. Just like a true ghost. He didn't think that could be faked.

He didn't do anything for the rest of the day. Well, what was there *to* do? He found that he couldn't leave, and he *tried*. Oh how he tried.. That was the strangest feeling in the world. Something felt as though it were blocking him from leaving the room. And no, he could not open doors, but he *could* go through walls. The walls between the bathroom and the rest of the apartment were fair game, but clearly not the walls separating him and the rest of the building.

But that's *fiiiine*. This was *fine* . Everything was *fine*. He's been through worse, right? He just needed some time to cool off, and then he'd be great. Death was something he could deal with. Death wasn't as big of a thing as he thought it was, right? It was a small confind space, you couldn't ever get lost, you didn't have to eat, you didn't- Oh god he hated this.

He was nearly not panicking by the time *someone* came knocking.

"Ranboo?" Karl's voice sounded muffled from behind the door. *Shit* , he was supposed to hang out with Karl today. Guess those plans have to be canceled. "It's been a bit and you won't answer your phone, so I wanted to check on you. Are you okay?" He waited for a reply he wouldn't get, though Ranboo gave his best to answer anyways.

"Yes Karl, I'm dandy."

"The dude downstairs said you haven't left, so you have to be in there, right?"

"Right."

"I'm just a bit worried. You didn't look that well last night."

"Must not have considering my situation."

"Ranboo, if you don't like uh.. say something, I may need to call the police, to make sure you're okay."

“The morgue would be more appropriate.”

Ranboo didn't bother trying to talk after that, instead holding his knees up to his chest. From the other side of the door, he could hear Karl talking to the operator. He wishes he could talk to Karl, let him know he was *there*. But right now, he just wishes he could sleep, even though he wasn't tired at all. And for once, he wished he *were* tired. He wasn't even sure if he *could* sleep.

Oh *god* someone was going to see his body. That's weird. Someone was going to walk in and say, ‘ *woah that's a dead guy* ’ and for some reason that was an embarrassing thought. Imagine dying from not taking your medicine. It's not like he thought he'd go out in any cooler way, but really? It was tragic, don't get him wrong, but.. It was his fault, wasn't it? Maybe that's why he was still here, and not that amazing heaven or afterlife that everyone spoke about. Was this Limbo? Hell? Was it bad enough to be called Hell?

And Karl. The poor guy. Ranboo hated himself. Why did he have to push back the medicine thing so that he could pay rent? He could've asked Karl for help at *any time* and he would've gotten it. But no, he was too focused on not wanting Karl to take that burden, but now the nicest person Ranboo's ever met has to walk around with a dead kid on his conscious. He'd probably need therapy and shit..

More yells came from outside of the door, from officers warning before coming inside. An extra key was given so they didn't need to break down the door. Ranboo was surprised they were allowed to do that, since he was an adult (on papers) and was only just now reported missing. Maybe Karl was just very convincing.

In any reason, the door opened, the officers reacted how he thought they'd react, calm because they were trained, but taken back because were they really expecting a dead guy? And then the body was *out*. It freaked him out to watch as they wheeled his body outside.

He wished he could go *with* it. But no. It was almost like an invisible wall separated him from the world, even when the door was opened. He could see out, but couldn't get one finger outside his room. So this was where he was stuck for all eternity? The sequel to life was the same dusty room he'd been calling home for months?

This wasn't how it was supposed to be. Ranboo was supposed to move *out* . He was supposed to get a better home, one with real couches that he could *feel* , actual food that wasn't quick snacks from the same store he worked at. Karl was supposed to hang out with him today. Fuck. He wanted a *life* . How could he lose something he hadn't even begun to have?

It was his fault though, wasn't it? If he'd just worked a little harder, he'd have his medicine and he wouldn't be in this situation. If he'd worked a bit more, Karl wouldn't be having such a shitty day and Ranboo wouldn't be stuck in this hell.

Maybe if he hadn't run away, he wouldn't be in the position. He was selfish. He was a bad person. He should've stayed with his aunt. The things that happened there happened for a reason. This was his punishment for leaving her alone; for leaving everyone alone.

Maybe it wouldn't be so bad though. There could be a way to leave his apartment, and he just needed to figure out the trick. Maybe a specific *place* he needed to exit at.

Ranboo ran his hands along all the walls, seemingly being the only thing he could touch when it led to the outside. But nothing. All the walls were solid, and very effective at keeping him in.

He sighed with no breath, collapsing onto the floor though there was no thud. No sound to prove he was there.

What god decided this was for him? What Death forgot about him? He deserved this though, didn't he?

Chapter End Notes

Please don't comment about Techno's death anytime after this chapter. If you feel like you need to, take this one chapter as the time and place to rant, because I know it's sometimes hard to find places to do so. I love you all, take care. <3

I CAN BREAK SHIT?!

Chapter Summary

Unwanted visitors move into Ranboo's apartment. Meanwhile, Tommy and Tubbo advertise.

Chapter Notes

TW: nothing hehe

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Death was a lonely thing. It was cold, though you can't feel it. When more and more days began to pass, Ranboo learnt that easily. The temperature doesn't need to be low to feel cold. No air was needed to move around the room for you to feel insanity and cool numbness in your fingertips.

Death was defeat. His things, though as few as there were, were moved from the room. His blue sleeping bag? Gone. His empty mini fridge? Probably in a trash can by now. His *hard earned cash*? God, he didn't wanna know. It's not like he had made a will or anything. If he had, everything of value would probably have gone to Karl. No one else was in Ranboo's life, after all.

With things moving *out*, something else moved *in*. Or some ones. A couple. Man and woman. They looked okay at first. Nice and loving to each other. Until the landowner left and the act dropped.

God they were snobs.

"And we have to stay *here*?" The woman touched the wall as if it had dust. Which it did *not*. The people who took his body cleaned practically the entire apartment before they left. It was spotless.

“Yes, honey.” The man was clearly biting back a remark. “It’s just for a little bit. Once we get that new raise and paycheck, we are moving somewhere *much* nicer.” He unpacked their things onto a bed they’d moved in. In fact, they moved in a couple pieces of furniture, though it was small for his- *their* room.

Stools sat in the corner, likely meant to be in front of a kitchen bar but they definitely didn’t have one. A mini fridge, though larger than his old one, was installed in the corner. He’d watch them pile it with food.

“I still don’t see why we couldn’t have taken a *hotel* or something. This place is awful. And did you see the landlord? He probably hasn’t washed in *days* .” Ranboo grimaced at that. The landlord, Darryl, was *very* nice. And he didn’t look bad! She was being completely unreasonable.

“I know, I know.” The man only agreed.

“And wasn’t there a guy who died here?? That’s putrid!”

“That’s how we got it so cheap, love.” No love was in that ‘love’. “How about you play some of your music, to relax to.”

Music! Ranboo liked music! Finally, *something* to listen to besides their awful chatter. Ranboo was a fan of most music, so it shouldn’t be so bad, right? He liked classical, jazz, rock, pop, and a lot more. Anything this snobby woman would play would probably be something he’s heard before.

It was not.

Definitely not.

She. Played. The. Worst. Music. Possible.

Some kind of screaming mixed with a really bad guitar solo and drums too loud at times that drowned out the actual singer. And she played it so *loud*. Didn't she know she couldn't do that in apartments? If Ranboo still had eardrums, they'd be bursting.

It wasn't much of a surprise when they got a knock on their door.

Ooo who would it be?? That super muscular guy from upstairs? He was usually very nice but he'd kick their *asses* if he needed to! Or that woman from down the hall? She was terrifying, so maybe she would knock some senses into this couple!

The woman got up from her seat on their bed, turned down the music so slightly, and went open the door.

Little old lady Ethel stood, smile on her face, worn down light blue purse in hand.

"Hello!" She spoke, still smiling even though the snobby lady had the most disgusted glare. If this woman so much as makes Ethel *sad*, Ranboo's is going to lose it.

Ethel gave him *candy* and usually always asks how his day was! No one in the apartment could bring themselves to be even the slightest bit rude to her. She was the star of the building; the one who brought everyone together.

"I came by to give you a welcome present, hun." With handed over a paper plate with tin foil over it. The woman hesitantly took it, looking under the foil while Ethel continued. "I'm just across the hall if you need me. Did the same thing for our dear, Ranboo." A sad look crossed Ethel's face.

"Ehhh thanks but no thanks." The snob pushed the plate back into Ethel's arms. "I don't want any of your rotting pie or whatever you made."

What. The. Fuck? She didn't even have to *eat* it! Just keep it and say thank you! Or word it a bit more carefully? Why be rude to a complete stranger, especially one as sweet as Ethel.

"Oh, okay, deary." Ethel awkwardly chuckled. Before the door could close, she spoke once again. "Would you mind turning the music down a bit? Walls are thin here."

"This music is the only thing keeping me from *snapping*. " She spat, slamming the door in Ethel's face.

Ranboo was furious. What the fuck were they thinking?! Poor Ethel. He wanted to show them he was *there* . That *someone* saw that heinous act.

He looked around the room until his eyes landed on a vase. An ugly, purple vase sitting on one of the stools. Ranboo walked up to it, thinking hard. Ghosts in movies can move things, right? Maybe he just had to really *try*.

He put it hand by it, thinking hard about how they treated Ethel, thinking about the vase itself. He imagined his hand touching the coolness of the glass, the smooth texture.

The vase was slung away from the stool, flying a couple feet away. He immediately pulled his hand away, as if it had stung him.

The glass had shattered, and the couple gasped, staying silent as they looked around the room.

But Ranboo had *felt* that. He'd felt the vase, or at least he thought he did. For a split second, he could *feel* .

"What the fuck was that?!" The woman choked out. Ranboo grinned.

“It was probably just sitting on the stool weirdly, and fell.” The man was visibly shaken, but stood up to clean up the vase anyways. Ranboo caught the way he didn’t turn his back to where the vase was before it was slung.

“So it flew across the room?!”

“We’re tired. We’re on edge. Let’s just sleep it off, okay?”

“If a fucking *poltergeist* kills me, I’m haunting your ass.”

They laid down to go to bed, switching off the light. At least the music was off. But now, Ranboo had to up it. What could he do that was more than breaking a vase?

His hand went to the light switch. He imagined the texture and the coolness of it once again, imagining his finger tip on it.

The light switched on.

They jumped up. “There is a fucking ghost in this room or something, Bob!”

“It’s probably something with the building.” He stood up to walk to the light switch. “It’s old and it’s-“

“The light switch is turned *on*. You turned it off!” The woman had the blankets up to her chin.

“Like I said, we’re tired, and the building is old. Not a ghost.” He switched it off, heading back to the bed. “Ghosts aren’t real, but exhaustion is.” The two laid back down, safely under their blankets.

The light switched on.

“FUCKING HELL, BOB!”

“Okay this is ridiculous.” He stood up. “I’m about to go contact the landlord.” No no, he needed them *out* not to contact anyone.

Ranboo looked over at the woman still hiding under the blankets. He imagined the texture, the coolness.

Ranboo slung the blanket off of the bed. It took a minute to settle on the floor, but by then, the woman and man were screaming bloody murder, running out of the room. FUCK YEAH!

—

Tommy was so excited. Nothing could bring down his mood today. He was going to catch a ghost! *Dream* hadn’t caught a ghost yet. They’d become the most well known and popular ghost hunting team, and the Dream Team would be left in the dirt.

Tubbo had already started their social media! Advertisements for their local ghost hunting team were everywhere on twitter and Facebook. But they weren’t just advertising being able to *prove* there were ghosts. No. They were advertising that one lucky person would get to have their ghost *taken out* of their home.

Someone in L’manburg had to have a ghost problem after all.

But they needed more advertisements. More local citizens needed to know of their abilities. That’s when Tubbo came up with the brilliant idea of designing posters and setting them up around town. Big words and scary fonts covered the posters. So now all they needed to do was go out and put them up. Niki, Wil’s friend, owned a cafe, so they had decided to meet up there.

Tommy grabbed his red bag, holding the posters and ghost cube. His hand was on the door knob when a hand settled on his shoulder.

“What?” Tommy groaned, turning around. He knew it was Wilbur before the man even spoke.

“Look, I know I’m a bitch about it sometimes...”

“Ugh, Wil, don’t start.”

“But-“ Wilbur continued anyway. “-I think it’s important that you know that you have to be *careful* when going about in South L’manburg.”

“Wil-“

“It doesn’t matter if ghosts are real or not. The real monsters are other people.”

“Yeah yeah, I know.” Tommy ignored the serious glare in his brother's eye. “Don’t go with strangers even if they offer candy, don’t tell anyone where I live or my full name or my age.”

Wilbur let go of Tommy’s shoulder after a second, the seriousness wavering a bit. “Be careful. And *call* me if you’re in trouble.”

“Okay, Wil.”

He left before Wil could go into another rant, slamming the door and jogging down the street. He knew Wil was always a nervous wreck when it came to him going out alone. Tommy wasn’t an idiot; he knew something happened a while ago, probably when he was just a toddler. None of his family talked about it though, so he never brought it up.

Tommy shook the thought away. Today wasn't a worry about Wilbur day. Today was a kick ass and advertise his dream job day.

When he walked into Niki's cafe, Tubbo was sat at one of the stools, cup in hand while he snacked on a muffin. Niki waved to him, gesturing to the seat beside Tubbo.

"Hey, Tommy!" She pushed another muffin, blueberry which was his favorite, and a cup of juice towards him. He loved Niki. She always gave them food on the house when they came, as long as it was just a muffin and a drink. It was the special privileges that came with his brother being friends with a cafe owner. "Goin hunting today?"

"Actually, we're advertising." Tommy spoke through a mouthful of muffin.

"Oh yeah, Tubbo mentioned that." She took a batch of cookies out of the oven, setting them on the counter to cool. "I don't mind if you hang one in here."

"Thank you, Niki!!" Tommy dug out a poster from his bag. With a tape dispenser, they hung it on the white wall of the cafe.

"You guys are advertising to *catch* ghosts?" Niki read the poster, squinting at it. "How would you do that?"

"You'll see, dear Niki. You'll see." Tommy raised his eyebrows and squinted his eyes suspiciously before taking another bite of the muffin.

Niki was always one to support their antics. He wasn't sure if she believed in ghosts, but she was a great friend anyway.

"Hey, I have a buddy who works farther down in South L'manburg. He'd probably let you hang some up." Niki mentioned as they were getting ready to leave. "Pretty big convenience

store. You know the one.”

“Oh hell yeah.”

“Convenience stores are haunted anyways!” Tubbo added. “And people in that part of town are always talking about haunted places and ghosts. Best place to advertise.”

“Yeah but boys.” Niki stopped them. “If you do go, have a chat with him? He’s been pretty down lately and would probably enjoy a conversation.”

“Of course Niki!” The two were barely listening, waving goodbye to her before walking down the street.

The further they walked, the more run down the buildings got. From time to time, they taped one of the posters to a light pole. Someone would be able to track them down, simply because there was a clear line of posters down the street. Everything in South L’manburg was grey. The stores, which were once bright red bricks, now were faded and difficult to tell the difference between the walls and the pavement. Windows to the stores were sometimes cracked, or completely broken from either weather or a burglary. Whoever owned it didn’t have enough money to get it fixed. The pavement itself was cracked and the once flowerbeds held no flowers, but instead weeds that wrapped around the sides, growing into the cracks of the sidewalks.

Despite all the rot and neglect, South L’manburg was beautiful, in its own way. In the same way that death was frightening, but peaceful. It was a place of quiet, and a quick look into what understanding would be after you die. Understanding and acceptance that this was your fate, and it wasn’t a bad one.

The sky got darker the deeper in South L’manburg as they walked. Some omen that they shouldn’t be there. That’s not where they belonged. They belonged back in North L’manburg; back in the polished buildings and bright skies. But they’ve come too far now.

Storm clouds covered the sun completely by the time they saw the dim light of the convenience store ahead of them. On one of the lightposts, a bright poster struggled to keep

itself stuck to the wood as wind barreled into it. It read, 'The carnival is back in town!' in red letters. He wrinkled his nose as they passed it. Fuck carnival's. Fuck clowns.

As soon as water began to trickle down, the two sprinted for the dryness of the store. The bell above the door rang.

"Welcome. Let me know if you need help finding anything." They turned to look at the counter. A young man who looked like he'd seen better days stood there. A smile was forced onto his face, but the redness in his eyes and the bags under them told a different story.

"Are you Niki's friend?" Tubbo asked, leaning on the counter. Now that they were closer, Tommy could see that the man's name tag said Karl.

"Oh yeah. Why?"

"She said to ask you about hanging some of our posters in the store."

"Depends.. what kind of posters." He asked, suspicious. "If it's another one of those joke posters, it's a no."

"No no." Tommy pulled out one of their advertisements, showing it to Karl proudly. "We're ghost hunters. Have to get business somehow, amiright?"

Karl chuckled. "Okay. You can hang up a few."

Tubbo grabbed two, turning around to place them around the store. He'd given Tommy a glare, signaling him to stay and hold up their end of the deal with Niki. Chatting with Karl.

"Sooo, Karl." Tommy started. "Get many customers?"

“Not at this time usually.” Karl simply stated.

“Any... ghosts?”

“Not in here I’m afraid.” He smiled. There was still a pained look in his eyes. It made Tommy’s heart drop just to look at him. Something wasn’t right with Karl; Niki was right.

Karl blinked when he realized he’d been staring at Tommy, looking away. “Sorry. Just lost in thought. You two remind me of someone I used to know.”

“Must’ve been super cool if the *great Tommyinnit* reminded you of him.” He said not in a tone which praised himself, but in an effort to bring the mood up a bit. He was happy to find Karl smiling a bit more genuinely.

“He was.”

When Tubbo got back, rain was starting to fall outside. He wished he would’ve looked at the weather before leaving. Maybe then they would’ve brought a raincoat or an umbrella.

“Wait here.” Karl stood, walking behind a door before walking back out with two raincoats in hand. They were bright yellow. “We have some extra raincoats for employees. They won’t notice two missing.”

“Thanks, Karl!” They wave, beginning to step out of the store.

“I’m here most days if either of you need me.” Karl waved back before adding. “You can ask for help if you need it.” Weird wording, but okay. They thanked him once more before leaving.

The rain forced them to head back home, but it began to rain harder. It was hard to see with all the water coming down. The two barely made it into Niki’s cafe, just wanting to get out of

the rain.

“Boys! Come in!” Niki waved them over. “I’ll make some hot chocolate.” God, he loved Niki.

They were sat at the stools, having pulled off their raincoats and sat them on separate chairs to dry. Niki was just in front of them, fixing their drinks.

Tubbos' phone rang. He answered.

“Yes?”

A pause.

“Hold on, let me get something to write on.” Tubbo dug through his bag, pulling out a notebook and pencil. “Go on.” He scribbled something down.

“We can be there tomorrow-“

Another pause.

“Well.. if the rain lets up, we can make it?”

Pause.

“No problem.” He hung up.

“We got a job?!” Tommy shook in anticipation.

“We got a job!”

Chapter End Notes

Hey, so I don't know when I'll be able to update again. I'm trying my best but with marching band and me being a captain, I have to work on that :(EVERYTHING HURTS GUYS MY ARMS AND LEGS ACHE AAAA. But I got ADD meds and I feel like I can write some more!! Hopefully more chapters soon. Love u all <3

Alexa, play 1999 Pokémon theme song by Jason Paige

Chapter Summary

Benchtrio has finally met. But it's a rocky start. Plz read notes it's important.

Chapter Notes

TW: NOTHINGGGG

Hey so, so sorry these r coming out kinda slow. I have a LOT of stories I'm working on and I have band. I'm gettin there. BUT BIG WARNING RIGHT HERE FOR THE REST OF THIS STORY AND SPECIFICALLY NEXT CHAPTER: there is something with this story specifically involving Techno and death (he does not DIE really. No one will die besides Ranboo in this story lmao). I wrote that months before learning of the real Techno's passing. I've tried to rewrite it but nothing seems to fit. If you guys have a problem with it I will def change it, just let me know. It just won't fit as well and might seem a bit dumb. Thanks for reading if you did. I really have to know, I don't want to make any of my readers uncomfortable. <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Ranboo didn't usually have a lot to be proud of, but it was safe to say he was pretty proud of this. The couple hadn't come back the entire night, and so far, the next day. He'd scared them *shitless* . At least he had that. Maybe being a ghost wasn't so bad.

No. It was still pretty bad. Still couldn't talk to anyone, or feel anything unless he really put his mind to it. And he was alone. Not even the awful music played. Everything was quiet. It was painfully quiet. It got to the point where he couldn't take it anymore, and focused really hard on moving the sink handle on, which actually worked. Water ran keeping a constant stream of noise. It was better than the silence.

He stared blankly around the room.

Now what? There was nothing to *do*. God, he wished he could sleep. Apparently, ghost's can't sleep. At all. His mind outright won't let him. He's forced to sit and think all day, and that's exhausting. Back when he was alive, he always had something to do. When he wasn't working, he was trying to catch up on sleep. This was *slightly* better, since he didn't feel exhausted all the time, but really? No sleep at all? He couldn't have a healthy middle ground?

In any way. He was simply glad that the couple were gone.

That was until their ugly faces showed back up at his door, this time with two new faces behind them.

“You said someone died here a few days ago?” A blonde boy asked when the four of them stepped into the room. He had a camera in his hand, and a red backpack. The boy beside him had brown hair, and was holding onto his green bag with both hands like a child. The couple nodded, answering his question.

“How did they do that that soon?!” The brunette tilted his head in confusion.

“Rent out the apartment? I dunno. But it was cheap.” The man practically yawned. “He didn't have any family; so they could get rid of his stuff pretty quick.”

“Yeah, I have the report pulled up on my phone.” The blonde looked over his friend's shoulder to see.

“Just get him out, okay? This is a very cheap apartment, and we'd like to stay until we can move somewhere better.” The couple left, closing the door with a loud click.

Who were these two kids? They definitely weren't *their* kids. It's almost as if they were hired for a job- oh god they're like GhostBusters. Maybe they'd get him out of here though! Take him somewhere away from those god awful people. Sounds great to him.

It's not like he could hurt as a ghost, so he didn't exactly have to worry about that. Maybe he could talk through one of those ghost boards... what were they called...?

"Tommy, get the EMF." The brunette knelt on the ground, pulling out some strange device from his bag before standing once again. His friend, Tommy, had pulled out yet another device, smaller than your average phone. When he clicked it, it immediately glew yellow and made a constant beep.

"Oh shit- Tubbo, there *is* a ghost here-"

"Hello!" Tubbo look the EMF from Tommy, stepping forward but not facing Ranboo at all. "I'm Tubbo, and this is Tommy!" He waved the EMF around, until it beeped in a bit of a higher pitch when it was closer to Ranboo. Tubbo stopped moving when it was pointing straight at his chest.

Ranboo stepped forward, curious.

The EMF changed to red, beeping ever higher. The two boys took a step back, and so did Ranboo. The light changed back to yellow.

"Put down the light-" Tommy said after a second.

"I am putting down the light, shush." Tubbo laid down the object he'd pulled out of his bag, onto the floor. It was a black box, with something that looked like a light bulb on the top.

"Okay." Tubbo started speaking once again, this time clearly to Ranboo. "Make the light shine once for yes, and two for no. Can you hear us?" Make it shine? Was there a switch or something?

He knelt in front of the light, looking for any switch.

"Can you hear us?" Tubbo repeated.

"Yes! I hear you. Just how do I-" His hand brushed the top of the light bulb, it flicked on just for a second, until his palm left.

“HELL YEAH!” Tommy cheered before Tubbo shushed him.

Tubbo glanced back to his phone before looking up again. “Are you Ranboo?”

Ranboo touched the light once. Alright! This was going somewhere! It wasn’t much of a conversation, but it was something! Tommy was a bit hyper but Tubbo sounded nice. Maybe they *would* help him out. If only he could ask his own questions.

“Okay okay.” Tommy had brought up his camera to record the scene. “So anything could be goin on with that light. Ask him something that only Ranboo would know, and something that clearly wouldn’t be a malfunction from the light.”

“Like what?”

“Like...” Tommy grabbed Tubbo’s phone, scanning over something before asking, “How old are you? Make the light flick for each year.” The two looked down, waiting anxiously.

He *could* just tell the truth. He was sixteen. *But..* they needed to know he was really him, and that report would have eighteen on it, not sixteen. He felt a bit heavier despite being a ghost, because for the first time he didn’t *have* to lie, but he was still going to anyway.

He clicked the light slowly, making sure each time could be counted.

“One.” Tommy counted allowed. “Two. Three. Four. Five. Six. Seven. Eight. Nine. Ten. Eleven. Twelve. Thirteen. Fourteen. Fifteen. **Sixteen.** Seventeen. Eighteen- Holy shit!!” Tommy bounced with glee.

Ranboo found himself smiling as well.

“Ranboo, Ranboo.” Tubbo silenced Tommy. “Are you the only one in here? Besides us, obviously. I’m talking about other ghosts.” Ranboo idiotically glanced around, as if some new ghost would appear out of nowhere. If there were anyone, he probably would have noticed.

He flicked the light once.

They thought for a second, sparing each other a glance. They seem to know what the other is thinking without anyone needing to say anything. It was an understanding that Ranboo wanted as well. Something he'd seen with other people all his life, but never had himself.

“Ranboo, would you like to come with us?” Go with them? They could take him out of here? That would be great! Anywhere but here with those awful people.

Before he could answer, the door swung open.

“Could you *hurry it up*. ” The woman groaned. “ *Some* of us have a life, ya know.”

“We’re talkin to him! Be patient, bitch.” Tommy flipped her off, and Ranboo couldn’t help but laugh. Exactly what she deserved.

“Get it out now, or I’m not paying you!” She spat. “I’m serious. Get it out.”

Tommy sighed, digging through his bag. “We’ll get him out, dickhead. Just give me a second.” There was a mocking tone in his voice. A second later, Tommy pulled out yet another device. Tubbo had already packed away the light.

This new device was a cube. A shiny, black cube. It almost reminded him of a rubix cube, but completely useless since it was all one color. But it shone metallic in the yellowish lighting of the apartment.

Tommy stepped forward, holding out the EMF reader so that he could see where Ranboo was standing. Ranboo didn’t like this..

“Tommy, we didn’t get an answer yet!” Tubbo tried to stop him. “You’re gonna get yourself haunted, man.”

“I doubt he wanted to stay in the same room with this hag anyway.” Every step Tommy took forward, Ranboo took a step back. There was nowhere to run. He couldn’t leave.

It was at this point that Ranboo was seriously rethinking leaving. He didn’t know what that device was, or anything about being a ghost. And with Tommy’s malicious expression, it only made his anxiety spike more.

His back hit the wall, and Tommy got closer. The EMF was red, beeping rapidly, almost as if it were screaming.

“Tommy-” Ranboo and Tubbo said at the same time.

Tommy raised the cube.

“Tommy I swear to GOD-” Tubbo continued.

Tommy threw the cube. It should have passed through him. He wasn’t focusing on catching it or anything. It should have phased through him.

But it hit his chest with a thud. The room faded to black.

—

Tommy had done it. He’d caught a ghost. And it was *amazing*. Before it was sucked into the cube, he could see an outline of a tall man, before it disappeared once again. The cube had hit him square in the chest, and fell to the ground. The lines around the cracks of the cube were glowing a faint white now.

He’d *caught it*. Dream hadn’t caught a ghost! But *Tommy* did. He’d be famous! He’d be the most well known Ghost Hunter and Dream would be left in the dust. He’d pay for how he

treated Tommy and Tubbo. Maybe they'd recruit Sapnap.. Since he was a *little* bit better than the rest.

"Tommy, do you know what you just did?!"

"Caught a ghost, Tubbo."

"That's not how you're supposed to go along with it-"

"Thank you!" The bitchy lady thanked them, interrupting Tubbo and instead going to Tommy with a pat on the back. She nudged him into the direction of the door once he'd picked up the cube. "Please take that thing away and kill it again or something!"

"Bitch, you still need to pay us-" The man had come in after her, shoving thirty dollars into Tommy's hand. They then pushed them out without so much as a goodbye.

They stood outside the door. Tommy counted the money, making sure everything was there.

Behind him, Tubbo sent glares down his spine.

"What? If I hadn't done that she wouldn't have paid us." He turned to face his friend.

"And now what? What are you gonna do with a ghost that probably hates your guts now?" He paused to think. He hadn't thought that far.

"Show it to the Queen or something- I don't know, Tubbo!" He groaned. "Look, we have the money; we have the ghost. Now we figure out what to do with it. And I have the perfect person to ask."

"We're gonna ask, Tech-"

"Techno!" Tommy patted Tubbo's back, though his friend's arms were still crossed in frustration, his back slightly hunched. "He knows everything there is to know about ghosts." Tubbo sighed, not replying but still following Tommy down the stairs.

Tommy felt bad he'd scared Tubbo, yes. But they'd caught a *ghost*. What other ghost hunter could say they did that? They'd be famous! Tubbo would be perfectly fine once he saw how many views that video would get them. Tommy had filmed the whole thing. Now all that was left was to edit and post.

"Hello?" They stopped before they could open the door fully. A little old lady was standing halfway up the stairs, holding onto a light blue bag. "Are you those ghosty boys?"

"Uh, ghost hunters, yes." Tubbo smiled politely.

"Did you get dear Ranboo?" She looked hopeful.

Neither of them answered for a second. "Yes, we did."

"Oh thank you very much!" She waddled down the stairs until she was face to face with them. "Take good care of him. That couple up there can be nasty. I didn't want him to stay there for long." She whispered the last part. Scrambling through her purse, she pulled out two small and yellow candies, handing one to Tubbo and Tommy each. "Take care, you three!" She ruffled Tubbo's hair before leaving once again.

He glanced down at the circular candy in his palm. In large and squiggly white letters, it read 'Lemon Drops'. He wasn't completely sure it was candy, or just some weird cough drop that had confused her.

"I like her." Tubbo said once she was gone. They both still stood at the bottom of the stairs, their backs to the door.

—

By the time they arrived at Tommy's house, the rain had slowed to a drizzle. He'd tried to make Tubbo go home, so it wouldn't be suspicious, but he refused. Something about leaving Tommy with a ghost that probably hated him and could kill him if it got out.

"No, coconuts are not mammals." Phil was talking from the kitchen.

“They have hair, they have milk-“

“But they don’t have a fucking heart, Wil, Jesus Christ.”

The door closed shut. Tommy and Tubbo slipped their new raincoats off, hanging it on the coat rack, though Phil didn’t ask where they got them; he probably thought they were from Tubbo’s house.

“No mustard, Tubbo?” Phil reached back into the bread box to make an extra sandwich.

“Nope! Thank you!” Phil nodded as the two of them sat at the kitchen counter, Tommy being right by Techno. Beside Techno, sat Wilbur, who was playing some game on his phone, making a point to not look up. Techno had his face buried in a book, but obviously knew Tommy was staring him down.

“What do you want, Tommy?” Techno sighed, slowly looking from his book to his younger brother.

“So, yeah, uh, we were just wondering... like we were talking at Niki’s for a bit...” Tommy mumbled. Techno stared blankly. “What would you do, if like you, hypothetically, *caught* a ghost?”

“Tommy, how did you catch a ghost.”

“I said hypothetically!”

“Well, hypothetically, you’d have to keep it *caught* and in a place it couldn’t haunt you. You’d have to keep it locked up forever because the risk of an angry ghost is not one you want to mess with in case you can’t catch it again. But how did you catch a ghost?”

“We didn’t catch a gho-“

“You can’t catch ghosts. They aren’t *real*. ” Wilbur shut off his game, standing up to meet Tommy’s eyes. Tommy stared back just as fiercely.

“Tell that to the couple we saved from it.” Tommy scoffed, a bit too loud. The silence ate at him. He looked up, to see everyone staring at him. Tubbo had his hand over his mouth.

“Tommy, did you talk to strangers?” Phil asked in his terrifying, dad tone. Phil was a very chill parent, but he knew shit was *real* when that tone came out.

“Well.. yes? But it was done safely!”

“Tommy, where did you get the ghost from?” Techno asked. Tommy stayed silent.

“Where did you go to get the ghost, Tubbo?” Phil reworded it at Tubbo. *Fuck* . He knew Tubbo couldn’t *lie* to Phil.

“some couples' apartment..”

“Boys!” Phil sighed loudly.

“It was done safely and we’re fine. What’s the big deal?” Tommy groaned.

“You broke my one rule. Don’t. Talk. To. Strangers. And especially don’t *meet* them anywhere!”

“Dad-“

“You’re grounded for a week.” Phil interrupted. “And Tubbo, you’re telling Schlatt about this.”

“He’ll ground me for three times as long!” Tubbo dramatically covered his face.

“He deserves to know. You’ll tell him, and I *will* find out if you don’t.” Tubbo only nodded, not looking at Phil.

“Dad, I think it was worth it though!” Tommy pulled out the glowing cube. “Look, this-“

“Tommy!” Wilbur was in front of him now. “You can’t just put your life at risk because you wanna be a ‘ghost hunter’ or some shit! It’s not fair for anyone.” He took the cube out of Tommy’s hand.

“Give it back.” Tommy commanded firmly.

“You’re going to end up killing yourself *and* Tubbo if you keep this up.” Tommy grabbed at the cube, fighting for it.

“Wil, give it back.” Phil ordered tiredly.

“No! This shit is going too far.” He tried to hold the cube above his head, away from Tommy who was already climbing up his arm. “You’re being a fucking brat, Tommy. You know that? A selfish dickhead because you never think of the consequences .”

“Give it back, biTcH.” Tommy scrambled to tear the cube from Wilbur’s grasp. They threw insult after insult at each other. He’ll show him how *amazing* of a thing they just did when he got the cube back-

The cube was slung from their hands. Tubbo tried to catch it, but was too far.

As it met their hard, oak floorboards, the sides opened up, and the white lights blink off in an instant.

Well.

Hopefully it would haunt Wil.

Chapter End Notes

Hello!! I hope you enjoyed. If you haven't, read the first notes of this chapter for an important question :D

You know, usually, fathers have to deal with their sons bringing bugs or stray dogs inside the house. But you had to choose ghosts??

Chapter Summary

Ranboo is freEEeEeEee. Tommy and Ranboo TALK?! Also crazyyyy Wilbur Phil heart to heart talk or something idk.

Chapter Notes

TW: NOTHING BABYYYYYY! Unless you count the mention of guns at the end.

I've decided to take out the Techno part of you HAPPENED to read my notes last chapter. Well I sort of took it out. It's fixed now and shouldn't be triggering to anyone.
<3

Also, so sorry if this chapter is short. I thiiiink the next one is longer? I know that the next chapter has THE scene I've been wanting to write since I started this story, so hopefully you'll like it too.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Tommy and Tubbo dive for the cube, trying to shut it. But it's too late...

Ranboo is FREE! Though the cube wasn't *that* bad. Only a bit dark and cramped. It felt more like sitting in a closet, only that you didn't have hands, or legs, or a torso, or any body at all, and all you could do was listen to the mumbles around you.

In fact, he heard Ethel when they were leaving! It was a relief to see that she knew where he was, and still cared about him. He hoped that she'd be okay living next to those awful people. But, now he had to deal with where *he* was. A room full of maniacs.

Everyone had gone silent once the cube had broken. But that gave him time to learn faces. He'd heard them talking, and he was *pretty* sure he could make out who was who. Phil, Wil (Wilbur?), and Techno were the new three.

"Toms, is it broken?" The man who he was pretty sure was Wilbur, asked anxiously.

Tommy was silent for a second, holding the cube with his back to his brother. Tubbo had a horrified look on his face. "You better thank the woman who birthed you that it's not

broken!” He turned around, scowling.

“Shush! Both of you!” Phil, the blonde man, quieted them. “Go to your rooms. You two need to calm down a bit before you talk-”

“ *There is a GHOST in our HOUSE who wants to KILL me!*”

“Tommy, please,” Phil sighed. “Go to your rooms. Tubbo, I think it’s best if you go home for now. To let everyone cool off.” Ranboo didn’t miss the reassuring look that Techno sent Tubbo. Even so, the boy hesitantly nodded, stepping away to leave. Tommy and Wilbur had already disappeared to their rooms.

“Wait, Tubbo! Don’t forget your sandwich, mate.” Phil handed Tubbo his sandwich, ruffling his hair apologetically. But Ranboo wasn’t interested in that. He was interested in where Techno went, and which room Tommy went into. What else was he supposed to do? Maybe Tommy would have that light thing and they could talk some more. He really hoped that he wouldn’t be put into the cube again, though.

He caught up to Techno in the hallway, who knocked on a door instead of opening it immediately. He only actually went in when a muffled ‘come in’ was heard.

The room they stepped into was painted a dark shade of red. Posters from various movies and games were hung around the walls. There was a shelf full of books (mostly comic books) and various action figures and knickknacks. The flooring was a fuzzy looking blue carpet. He wished he could feel it. Across the room, on the very corner of the bed, sat Tommy. His cheeks were puffed with anger, but other than that, his expression might have a touch of fear.

“You okay?” Techno asked, sitting on the side of the bed.

“Does it *look* like I’m okay?” Tommy snapped, though Techno wasn’t fazed. Ranboo wondered if it was just normal for Tommy to be so rude, or if it was just the stoicness of Techno. “What am I going to do?! There’s a ghost in our house, who’s probably mad at me because I forced him in the cube, and my own dad doesn’t believe me, and Wilbur is being an ass, and-”

“Can I see it?” Techno interrupted, holding his hand out until Tommy sighed and put the cube in his hand.

After studying it for a moment, Techno said, “Yeah. It’s authentic.”

“I know that, thanks.”

“If it was going to hurt you, it probably would already be trying. Spirits usually don’t plan things out. They don’t need to; they can’t get hurt.”

“So what do I *do* though?”

Techno gave a thoughtful expression, before standing up. “I’ll be right back.” He left the room, only to return with, you guessed it, *another* device. How many ghost hunting tools do

these people need?

“I was going to wait for your birthday, but today seems like a pretty good day to gift it,” Techno chuckled the device over to Tommy, who fumbled with it, but caught it nonetheless.

“*Spirit box..*” Tommy whispered, admiring the small, black device.

“You have the EMF?” Tommy nodded, pulling the EMF out of his pocket, handing it to Techno.

“If it’s mad, or just confused, it probably followed you.” Techno flipped it on. It immediately beeped a high pitch, and shone red. Tommy sucked in a breath through his teeth. The room was tense. If Ranboo could feel the air, it wouldn’t be moving. It almost made him feel *bad* that he was scaring the boy so much-

but how was that *his* fault? He didn’t ask to be kidnapped! This guy cornered him and forced him inside a fucked up box then has the audacity to act like *Ranboo* was in the wrong?

“What’s his name?” Techno asked Tommy before asking Ranboo anything.

“Ranboo,” Tommy answered, still wide eyed, searching around the room for any movement.

“Ranboo,” Techno started. “Are you mad at Tommy?” Ranboo thought for a second. *Was* he mad? No. He wanted to get out of that room anyways, right? Even if it happened in a less than nice way, he was out. And as insane as these people were, they weren’t like the couple.

“**Not.. really.**” He answered, unsure if it would work.

He heard his voice repeated back to them in a staticky audio, but it was clear what he said. Upon hearing Ranboo’s response, both Tommy and Techno visibly relaxed.

“Oh thank god.” Tommy sighed with relief. “NOW GET BACK IN THE GODDAMN CUBE!” He waved the cube around in front of him. Ranboo took a step back before Techno grabbed the device, forcing it to be sat on the bed.

“Toms, let’s try to be *nice* to the ghost haunting your house, yeah?” Techno said through his teeth. “Ranboo? Would you like to get back in the cube?”

“**I’d rather not..**”

“He said he doesn’t want to-“

“I heard what he said, thanks.” Tommy crossed his arms.

Techno stood up, his expression blank. He laid the EMF back on Tommy’s bed and headed for the door.

“Where are you going?!” Tommy called out before Techno could leave. “You’re leaving me alone with some ghost?”

“He said he’s chill.”

“He could be *lying*! Plus he’s not in the cube. What do I do??”

“Talk to him, I dunno,” Techno shrugged, slowly shuffling out of the room. “Ghosts are often lonely.” He left, closing the door before Tommy could stop him.

For once, Ranboo was glad he couldn’t be seen. The only thing more embarrassing than being an unwanted house guest was being a *seeable* unwanted houseguest. Tommy sucked in another breath, closing his eyes before opening them again to grab the spirit box. “Ghost? I mean Ranboo?” Great start. “So uh, you got a hobby?”

“I um.. used to sleep a lot?”

“Rad. Can you sleep now?”

“no.”

“Oh..”

They spoke for a while. Conversation topics came and went. It was nice. Even in life, he’d never had many conversations like this. It hurt him to think of it, but not even with Karl. He’d been so tired, he’d never talked to the man like this. It made him wonder what could’ve been. He’d had talks like these back at his aunt’s house, every once in a while. The passing kids from the street would chat when he was outside. Of course, it didn’t ever last long. As soon as his aunt’s face showed up, they’d be long gone. Soon, he did the same.

Ranboo spoke about his life, what he wanted to do before he died, what it was like living in that apartment; he did skip the part that he was actually sixteen and ran away. Ranboo couldn’t help but go into a rant about what he would do if he had the chance to *breathe* again, and Tommy listened. For someone as hyper as he was, he was a good listener. When Ranboo was finished, Tommy began telling him about his family, Tubbo, and Ghost Hunting experience.

“Yeah, and there’s this other Ghost Hunting team around here with the most *obnoxious* leader. The guy is out of his mind.” Tommy scoffed, waving his hands around dramatically. “I want *nothing* more than to shove my success in his face.”

“What makes him so great?”

“Nothing! He’s just older.” Tommy thought for a second. “But now, I’ve caught a ghost..” His expression changed to a sly one. Ranboo squinted at him, even though Tommy couldn’t see.

“Ranboo..” Tommy grinned. “You can haunt, right?”

“Like, throw shit around? Yeah?”

“Bigman, would you like to help me get some *revenge*? ”

Ranboo thought for a moment. Why would he say no to that? Why was he trying to find a reason to? It sounded fun, haunting Tommy's bully. Way better than just sitting around doing nothing for all eternity. But, was there something *more* he could get out of this?

Karl and Ethel crossed his mind. This experience was a life changer (literally). He could be a better person, if only..

“Do you know of any way a ghost could come back?”

“To life?” Tommy bit his lip, thinking. “I don’t.” Ranboo bit back a groan.

“But we may know someone who does.” Hope spilled back into Ranboo and he lit up. Tommy stood up from his bed, not sure where Ranboo was standing so he just looked ahead. Ranboo shuffled over so that he was facing him.

“You help me haunt Dream and become famous, and I’ll help get your life back.” Tommy held out a hand. “Deal?”

Ranboo imagined what hands felt like- what *his* hand once felt like. Warm skin and cold at the fingertips.

“Deal.” Ranboo reached out, shaking Tommy’s hand.

Wilbur was downright *pissed*. Yeah, Tommy was grounded, but Phil didn’t say anything about stopping that *stupid* ghost hunting shit. After everything that happened, that *could* happen, why did Phil still allow his kids to ghost hunt? It made absolutely no sense, especially when-

A soft knock on his door interrupted his thoughts. “Can I come in?” Phil. Ugh.

He entered slowly, quietly closing the door behind him after Wil mumbled a ‘come in’. In dad fashion, he wordlessly made his way over, sitting on the end of the bed with his hands folded on his lap. Wilbur was hugging onto a pillow, shooting daggers into his father’s side.

“I know you’re mad-”

“Mad?! He’s going to *die* , Dad.”

“He’s not going to die.” Phil stared forward, tired.

“How aren’t you more careful by now? Fuck, how is Techno not careful?” Wilbur shoved his face into the pillow, staying there for a second before lifting his head slightly. “You need to make him stop going to those places.”

“It isn’t how it was back then.” Phil shook his head. “They don’t go far, and they have cellphones. It’s a safe neighborhood-”

“Dad, *please*. ” The fear slipped out of him. All the times he’d yelled and mocked Tommy weighed down on him. But it was never from anger like Tommy surely thought. It was fear. Tears spilt; he hid them in the pillow.

An arm reached around him, pulling him into a hug. He buried his head into his dad’s shoulder.

Why couldn’t he understand that Tommy was in danger?

“They need a childhood, Wil.” Phil spoke softly. “It scares me too, I admit it. I can’t *not* be scared. But I can’t take away his childhood.” Wilbur sat up to look at Phil, eyes red. “If all I have to do is listen to some ghost stories, and set some limits on where they can go for him to be as safe as possible *and* be happy, then it’s worth it.”

Wilbur sighed, closing his eyes for a second longer than he needed to. He *hated* that. But he understood. Tommy needed to be happy and carefree while he could, like Wilbur once was. He nodded, showing Phil that he heard, and understood.

Soft footsteps left Tommy’s room from across the hall, closing the door with a click. He recognized the footsteps as Techno, as any brother could recognize any of his family by their steps. Techno had no doubt just gotten finished telling Tommy *more* things about ghost hunting. *More* places to go. *More* ways he could possibly die. Techno should know that’s a mistake, yet he does it anyways.

He still remembers that night. Light rain, the humidity, dark sky, gunshots, adreniline.

“If they go out anymore, I’m going with them.” He made up his mind.

“Wil, they’d *hate* that. *You’d* hate that.” Phil disagreed. “There’s other ways of spending time with him, mate. That just doesn’t sound like a great idea.”

“They just need to tolerate me.” Wilbur shook his head. He’d keep him safe. “Won’t even know I’m there.” Phil paused, thinking about it. What would he do if he said no? Could he really stop him?

“No harm in trying it once.” Phil smiled reassuringly after he’d made up his mind. “After he’s grounded, and goes out again, you can go with them.” Wilbur silently cheered.

“But,” Phil continued. “If it turns out to be a nightmare and they hate it, you have to stop. Tommy barely asks for anything other than ghost shit.” Phil chuckled. “Let him have it.” Wilbur nodded, agreeing. It was better than nothing.

After a second longer, Phil added, “And going back to therapy wouldn’t be terrible.. If you want it.” Wilbur groaned into his pillow.

Chapter End Notes

THESE ARE TAKING SO LONG BUT I THINK POSTING WILL SPEED UP NOW!!! I have a pretty good idea of how it'll go from here. I'm only about three chapters ahead of this one at the moment but I think I'll be able to post more often. So sorry for the late updates, life is busy. I hope everyone is doing good!!!!

R.I.P. Tubbo's fish

Chapter Summary

Carnival spooks

Chapter Notes

I totally wrote a chapter before posting this one guys, I promise. Please believe me. I HAVE THE END TO THIS SORTA WRITTEN THO I LOVE IT OMG. Prepare for the slowest updates tho RIP.

TW: 888888888o[[[[[[[;//////////////////// (my cat wrote the TW)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The night had been crazy. He'd talked to Ranboo for *hours*. He realized he had more or less the same humor as the ghost. They laughed and told stories. It wasn't often that you met someone new that you worked so well with. But when you did, it meant you had so many *stories* to tell them. Stories that you've told everyone else, *but* them. It was great.

It was great until he realized that Tubbo was probably freaking out, thinking Tommy was about to be killed or possessed by an angry poltergeist.

"Are you okay?! What happened? Did you recapture it? Did Techno help-" He interrupted Tubbo.

"I'm fine." He reassured him. "Ranboo and I were just having a nice chat about the filth in our oceans."

"Ha ha." Tubbo said sarcastically. "I know you're not joking about a ghost being let go in your home. You were the one who fucked up, after all. Capturing it before asking if it wanted it? Are you out of your mind? I HOPE you get haunted. I WANT you to-"

"No, we're really talking. Techno gave me a spirit box."

“Hello.” Ranboo staticked voice came out of the box.

“He says hi-”

“I know what he said.” Tubbo groaned. “At least you two are cool?”

“Yeah, we’re cool.” Tommy grinned. And they *were* . It was so amazing to have a ghost friend, Tubbo was right. He had imagined all the ways he could get back at the Dream Team. And he had a friend who would never die (again) and would help them with all sorts of things and-

He had to help bring him back to life. That’s what he promised, right? He did say he’d *try*. He’d said that he might know someone who could possibly help, not that he knew for sure. So if it turned out to be untrue, and Tommy’s memory failed him, would Ranboo not help anymore?

“Tubbo, Ranboo and I have this super cool, *amazing* idea.” Tommy could feel Ranboos' eyes set on him. Tubbo simply replied with a ‘hm?’ signaling Tommy to continue. So he explained his idea. They would find a time and place to see the Dream Team alone, and would get Ranboo to haunt them! They’d film them being scared little babies and become famous ghost hunters. Great and amazing plan, no need to thank him.

“Tommy, that’s stupid.” Tubbo crushed him. “It’s going to get us in trouble, and both of us are already grounded.”

“You really told your dad??”

“Of course I did! Phil’s scary when he’s serious and my dad is even *scarier*. ” He could hear Tubbo give a dramatic shake as if he were scared. “Better to just tell him before he could kill me for *lying* .”

“Fair enough.” Tommy shrugged. “But we’re doing it. It’s perfect. We have a *ghost* who agreed to do it. Of course we’re doing it.”

Only silence filled the other side before Tubbo spoke again. “Fine. But we’re doing it carefully. No one gets hurt, no one gets seen.” Tommy quietly cheered, before an invisible elbow hit him in his side. He spat out an insult at Ranboo before continuing with what the man wanted.

“But I promised Ranboo something in return.” Tommy took Tubbo’s silence as a go ahead to continue. “We have to try to find a way to bring him back to life.” The idea of such a thing had felt insane to him, and it still did. It felt.. wrong in some way; like going against some hidden law. It was one thing to save someone who’d just died, but to seek a way to bring back someone who’s been dead for days? Perhaps even weeks before they can find someone who can help? (If they could find someone at all). That was unheard of.

Tubbo choked. “Tommy,” He fumbled with his words. “Ranboo, I don’t know if that’s possible.” He paused. “Or *okay* to do in the first place.”

“Better to ask for forgiveness rather than permission. Know anyone?”

“Why would I know anyone who can do that?!”

“I’ve seen the tarot cards at your house before.”

“First of all, that’s a fortune tellers thing. And second, my dad bought them but can’t do shit with them.”

Tommy nearly crumbled. “So you really don’t know anyone? Because I sure as hell don’t.” He looked over to where Ranboo was standing at some point. The guy was probably just as, if not more frustrated than Tommy was.

The silence on the other line was deafening. “It’s kind of some story book coincidence, really.”

“What? So you *do* know someone?”

“There’s a Carnival coming to town starting tomorrow,” Tubbo started. Tommy was listening intently. Ranboo’s hands were pressed against the bed, making outlines against the sheet. He wasn’t sure if he meant to do that, or if it were accidental. “And my dad's old friend works in it. That’s why he got the tarot cards, to try to learn for him.”

“So he’s a fortune teller?”

“A bit of a medium *and* fortune teller.” Tubbo corrects.

“That’s great! And convenient.” Tommy smiled. “We can go and ask him about ghosts and shit, then find out if he knows anything about bringing people back from the dead!”

“Yeah, if only you weren’t grounded.” He didn’t have to see him to know Tubbo rolled his eyes. “I get to go only because I rarely get to see him so my dad is letting me go anyway.”

Tommy groaned, covering his face with his hands. “So what do I do? I’m the one with the ghost.”

“Put him in the cube and throw him out the window to me!” Tommy laughed outloud when he saw that Ranboo’s hands disappeared from the bed sheet after that statement, as if he didn’t want to be thrown out a window. He’s a ghost! It’s not like he could get hurt.

“Or..” Tommy thought.

—

Tommy awoke to the smell of bacon. It wasn’t often that it smelt like that in the mornings. Usually Phil didn’t bother making a full breakfast like that, unless he was particularly wanting to. He must feel pretty bad about grounding both him and Wilbur.. Perfect.

Unsurprisingly, Phil was at the stove. Techno was nowhere to be seen but Wilbur sat in his usual place at the table, scrolling through something on his phone.

“Mornin, dad.” Tommy cringed. Phil glanced back at him, raising an eyebrow but didn’t comment on Tommy’s mistake. It’s not that Phil would’ve *minded* that Tommy called him dad rather than Phil; it was just the fact that the only time Tommy ever did call him that, it was clear that he wanted something.

Tommy sat at the table, avoiding Wilbur’s glance up. The air around him was chill and simply sat. It sent goosebumps up his arms. He wished he could shove Ranboo out of the way but very obviously, he couldn’t. Stupid ghosts and their stupid way at making rooms freezing cold.

Phil set a plate of bacon and toast on the table. No one spoke besides the muttered ‘thank you’s’.

“So uh, da- Phil.” Phil looked back at him.

“Whatever it is, it’ll probably be no, Tommy.” He replied, though his expression wasn’t anger. It was never anger. Just the quiet tiredness that came with being a father who had trouble with punishing his children.

Tommy had been grounded before, obviously. For fighting Wilbur or sneaking off when he wasn’t supposed to. But Phil had always had trouble *keeping* him grounded. When Phil said he was grounded for a week, it actually meant half a week.

“Just hear me out first.” Phil’s lips pressed into a thin line, but he listened anyway. Wilbur had stopped scrolling his phone, listening though not looking up.

“Tubbo has this uncle coming to the carnival today.” He lied at the word Uncle. If Phil felt like it was more important then he would be more likely to let Tommy tag along.

“ *You* don’t have a family friend coming to the carnival today.” Phil replied. “I don’t see how that’s relevant.”

“Yes but this is like a once in forever thing.” Tommy fought back the urge to roll his eyes, instead waving his hands dramatically. “*Free shit.*” Phil raised an eyebrow. “He’s a fortune teller; we can get free fortunes.”

“This doesn’t have anything to do with *ghosts*, does it?” Wilbur finally looked up, squinting at his younger brother.

“He’s a fortune teller, dickhead.” Although he was a medium as well, Tommy definitely wasn’t going to say that. “Nothin to do with ghosts.”

Tommy put his eyes back on Phil, who was thinking it through, his forehead wrinkled up as his expression changed. “Schlatt’s letting Tubbo go.”

He’d expected Phil to question further; to call Schlatt and confirm it perhaps. Phil had trouble punishing them, but it didn’t mean he’d let Tommy just go off wherever he pleased when he’d been grounded.

“Okay.”

“Really?!” Tommy nearly leapt out of his seat. Phil casted an almost nervous eye on Wilbur.

“But-“ Tommy’s celebration was short. “Wilbur’s coming with you.”

—

The tension in the car could be cut with a knife. Tommy casted daggers into Wilbur’s back. He’d also refused to sit upfront, instead forcing Tubbo to take his usual spot in his brother's car.

Wilbur ignored Tommy with a poker face, turning up the volume to whatever song he was obsessed with that day.

He hated to admit it, but it was better than walking everywhere, especially since it would take them at least twenty minutes to get to the Carnival. But as *soon* as they were able to, they were ditching Wilbur.

Tommy’s hand tightened around the metallic black cube, glowing a faint white. Ranboo absolutely did *not* want to go back in. He complained of it being cramped and endless all at the same time. Blackest black with no way out; only the faint whispery voices and sounds of what was happening outside of it. It sounded enough to make someone go insane. As soon as he could, Tommy would let him out of it. Ranboo would just need to hang on until then.

“Does your uncle come up with the carnival every year?” Wilbur asked Tubbo above the music, not bothering to turn it down. Tommy hadn’t told Tubbo about the little ‘uncle’ lie but luckily he caught on.

“Usually, but he didn’t last year.” He replied. “Caught a virus or something. Was too sick to visit.” Wilbur nodded.

The two continued to chat, seeing as Tommy was absolutely refusing to acknowledge Wilbur. Why Phil felt as though they needed an escort was beyond him. They’ve always been safe and had never done anything *bad*. Well, not robbing convenience stores bad.

But why put him with the guy who he’d literally *fought* with the night before? Crazy parenting if you’d ask him.

Instead, Tommy focused on the town outside. Buildings were spread further apart the longer they drove. It was obvious that they were now in South L’manburg, but the very edge of it. The buildings that *were* there were unstable and in need of a new coat of paint, but there were more trees than you would find in other parts of South L’manburg.

Once they saw the carnival, the sky had already darkened, threatening rain just as it had done the previous day.

The carnival itself looked sad in the weather. The bright colors of the stands now seemed dull and sad around the dead grass and grey sky.

There weren't that many people there, but the ones who were were quiet and roamed around the different small stalls, playing the games. Tommy could already tell that Wilbur was not thrilled, even as they just stepped out of the car and through the entrance.

Wilbur followed silently as Tubbo and Tommy made their way through the area. He glanced at Tubbo, who gave him his own glare. They had to lose Wilbur.

A sad looking wooden stall caught his eyes. Various torn plushies hung from the top of it, clearly prizes for the obviously rigged dart game.

“Aren’t we supposed to be seeing Tubbo’s uncle?” Wilbur wrinkled his nose at Tommy when he stopped by the game.

“I want that cow.” He pointed at a small cow plushie. One of its eyes were missing, a piece of black thread sticking out in its place.

Wilbur crossed his arms, ignoring the impatient glare of the man behind the stand. “That wasn’t the deal.”

“We’re literally at a carnival, Wil!”

Wilbur looked ready to say something else, but paused, his eyes setting off somewhere behind Tommy. When Tommy turned to look, Wilbur grabbed his shoulders to keep him still, but Tommy had already seen.

“You’re getting distracted by *women*? ” He’d seen a group of girls, all standing in a circle and chatting. There wasn’t anything or anyone else *around* that Wilbur could’ve been looking at.

“Can you shut up-“

“Women love a man who gets his brother a cow.”

“That’s *Sally* . She’s actually the hottest girl in school and we’ve talked many times. Also-“

“Get *her* that stupid cow then, if you love her so much. Dickhead.”

“Yeah. Dickhead.” Tubbo nodded.

Wilbur thought for a moment, glancing over Tommy’s shoulder once more before looking back.

“Okay. But you’re staying with me.”

Turns out, Wilbur was either shit at darts, or it was rigged to a point where there was *no* chance to win. Probably both. At some point Wilbur’s curses got more boring than they were funny, and the two saw that as their time to leave. By this time, there were more people than before, making it less stress inducing to slip away.

Tubbo led him around groups of people, and past stands of games and food. Of course, Tubbo didn’t know exactly where it was, but he claimed to know what the tent looked like.

They stopped in front of a purple curtain. It was a thick layered tent almost in the shape of a square except for the very top of it curving up to a point. The purple curtains were shiny, and looked much better in the dim and glum atmosphere than any of the other decorations.

Tommy pulled the curtain open, stepping inside soon followed by Tubbo. As it was simply a tent, it had no floor. Only bare grass sat underneath them. A table covered in a thick purple cloth sat in the middle of the ‘room’. On top of that was a crystal ball. Very cliché, but what did he expect when entering a fortune teller attraction?

It was dimly lit, only the light from the mostly cloud covered sun outside filled the inside, but the curtain did a good job of blocking most of it out.

Despite it technically still being outside and the air had felt more warm than usual for a late autumn day, it was cold. The chillness of the area sent goosebumps up his arms. He could feel the tip of his nose begin to feel uncomfortably cold. Tubbo was clearly feeling the same, pulling his arms closer to himself.

“Where is he?” Tommy asked, walking a bit further inside. He eyed a box sitting in the corner, filled to the brim with various objects. Either important tools or junk. Maybe both.

“I have no clue-”

“Tubbo!” Tommy jolted back at the sudden voice. A man, barely any taller than Tommy himself, pushed another opening in the tent’s fabric opposite from them, and stepped inside. The guy *reeked* of mystery and knowledge. Also cigarettes. Tommy wasn’t sure that he liked him. He had a simple black beanie on his head, hiding most of his hair.

Where hair did come out, it was everywhere, though not in a messy way; purposeful. Raven strands of hair fell across his forehead, falling right beside a scarred and pale blue eye, much different from his other, dark brown and healthy one. The scar reached down to his lip, adding character to his smirk. His outfit was the definition of dapper. A neat and wrinkle free white collared shirt with suspenders and a dark red bowtie. In any other situation, Tommy would’ve laughed at such a ridiculous outfit. But this man made it work, and brought an uncanny feeling along with it.

The man brought Tubbo into a hug, and Tubbo didn’t fight it, hugging back. If he knew anything about his friend, he knew that he wasn’t exactly a hugger. The only time Tubbo hugged Tommy, was when Tommy initiated it. Though he tried not to so much as to not make him uncomfortable. Tommy had forgotten that this was Tubbo’s friend, practically family. That’s why they were able to come in the first place.

“It’s nice to see you.” The man said as the hug broke. “And you brought a friend?”

Tubbo turned to Tommy. “This is my best friend, Tommy.” He gestured to him to which Tommy replied by awkwardly waving. “And this is Quackity.”

“Pleasure to meet you, Tommy.” Quackity clasped his hands together, making a clapping sound. “You want free fortunes?” He stepped back, kneeling in front of the box Tommy had seen earlier in the corner. “I can’t guarantee it’ll be great news, but fortunes are always fun.”

“Nope. Not doing that again. Not after last time.” Tubbo crossed his arms, either from the cold or to make a point.

“What happened last time?” Tommy couldn’t help but ask.

Tubbo didn’t reply.

“It told him that his fish died.”

“Schlatt told me it ran away!” Tubbo defended. “It was more of a ‘my father lied to me’ than me grieving. I don’t grieve over fish that’s the dumbest thing-”

“We’re getting off topic.” Tommy interrupted.

“Right.” Tubbo quickly ended his rant. “We actually need to ask you something.” Quackity stopped rummaging through his box, standing. His dark eye met Tommy.

“Something serious?”

“Sort of?” Tubbo glanced back at Tommy, his eyes flicking to his pocket and back to him.

Ranboo must be feeling very uncomfortable right now, being stuck for so long in the tiny object. So Tommy took out the cube, feeling the coolness of the metal before holding it out in his palm. With a click, the sides opened up, and the white light faded away.

—

The moment Ranboo was free, his eyes were met with a dim room. It was a welcome change to the cube, at least. In there, he could see nothing but his own hand. As if nothing else *existed* except for him. It wasn’t *darkness*, exactly, but it was close.

He took a second to gather his surroundings. Purple curtains, round table, grass, Tubbo, Tommy, a strange man looking *straight at him*.

Ranboo glanced behind him, checking that there was no one behind him. And there wasn't. Either the man was purposely staring at a blank curtain, or he was indeed, looking straight into Ranboo's eyes.

"They put you in a rubix cube?"

"It's not a rubix cube!-"

"You can see him?!" Tommy interrupted Tubbo, his grin widening. Quackity sighed softly, stepping past them until he reached the entrance. He grabbed two pieces of the curtain which hung off, and tied them together, seemingly 'locking' it.

"Why don't we sit down?"

They sat on the grass, ignoring the table which only had two chairs anyway. Tommy and Tubbo explained the situation thankfully, letting Ranboo relax a little. Even as a ghost, his anxiety still got the better of him. And this man, who he *finally* learnt was Quackity (the cube isn't the best place to be if you want to actually *hear* conversations), appearance was not helping. The guy was *terrifying*. Why was he scared? He was *dead*. What could happen? Could he kill him again? Probably not.

"Oh, so you *just* died?" Quackity looked at Ranboo, who nodded. "So you don't know the tricks yet, right?"

"What tricks?" Tommy cut in.

Quackity ignored him, instead looking around the room until his eyes fell onto a specific spot on the ground, away from them. "Charlie?"

"Charlie?" Tommy repeated, but in a far more confused tone. Ranboo looked over in the spot, waiting.

Fading into his view, stood a man, slightly shorter than Quackity. His hair was neatly combed, despite obviously being a ghost. He *was* a ghost, right? How else would he fade like that? In all else, he looked normal...

Unless you noticed the green goo sticking to his skin, making it a translucent pale green and dripping off slightly.

“ *Who ?*” Was all Ranboo could choke out.

“Hello!” The green man walked towards him, causing Ranboo to scoot away. “No need to fear! You’re already dead.” Oh, yeah.

Ranboo glanced back over to Tommy and Tubbo, who sat wide eyed at the green ghoul. “You can- They can see him?”

“They can.” Quackity nodded.

Before Tommy or Tubbo could get out a word of surprise, Quackity quickly explained. “That’s Charlie. He’s a ghost.”

“Hello, fellow dead guy!” Charlie had shuffled over, sitting by Ranboo who had unknowingly scooted closer to Tommy as if *he* could do anything about this.

“How can we see him...?” Tubbo asked. “And why haven’t you told me this before?! I always talk about ghost shit! I’ve said I wanted to be a *ghost hunter* and you didn’t share that you *KNOW A GHOST?* !”

Quackity let out a breath from his nose. Moving his eyes away for a moment to think. “It may be difficult for you to understand, but I promise I have a great reason.” Tubbo tried to speak again but Quackity continued.

“Okay, Ranboo. You said you can touch things, right?” Ranboo nodded. “Well, to do that, you have to really focus. That intense focusing is what’s allowing you to be a part of the physical world again.”

Beside him, Charlie was nodding along, either not noticing or not caring that Ranboo was glancing back at the green slime dripping from his face.

“Well, you can do the same for speaking and actually being *seen* .”

“So we won’t have to use the spirit box?” Tubbo asked.

“Nope. Just something you’ll have to practice, Ranboo.”

Tommy tried to look towards Ranboo though his eyes were slightly further left. “Try to become visible!” “Uh..”

“Try to imagine your skin touching the air. Or other people's eyes observing you.” Quackity offered before Charlie added, “It helps to focus on your goop!!”

So Ranboo did. He thought about how the wind felt as it blew against his arms, and of the still air in the tent as it filled his lungs. For a second, Ranboo felt nearly alive again; still with his aching heart and stiff limbs. He’d had lots of bruises painting his legs from his medication, and the headaches which constantly plagued him.

He hated himself for the thought, but-

Would living be any better?

Could he do any better, with the knowledge he has now? Would he be able to work harder?

Ranboo hadn’t felt any different, but clearly *something* had changed.

Both Tommy and Tubbo’s eyes were on him. *Really* on him.

“Why are you so fucking tall?!”

Chapter End Notes

I'm STRUGGLIN. I feel awful when im not on ADD meds but then I struggle to write even MORE with them. Someone hit my car. Got asked out twice, am panicking. And we can't have phones out in class and that's when I WRITE OMGGG. That's my rant. I like to rant. No one reads these anyway, right.

If I were you, I'd act super miserable and go to a cemetery

Chapter Summary

Quackity is cool

Chapter Notes

This is going so slow but I just wrote another chapter. I promise this fic will be finished at some point lmao. Also, plz ignore typos I wrote this forever ago and did not read over it recently.

TW:
None

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

They let Ranboo practice being visible and speaking. They even took photos of him to let him see himself. Apparently he was very bad at the whole visible thing at the moment, and was more of a see through and colorless mist. His talking wasn't any better, being broken up and quiet.

Quackity assured him that he would get better with time, and that it was impressive that he was able to do anything as quickly as he did. Maybe it helped that he'd already figured out how to touch objects.

Tommy and Tubbo had fun chasing him around the tent, trying to guess where he'd come up next. Charlie couldn't help but join in himself.

Speaking of Charlie, Ranboo hadn't needed to work up the courage to ask about the green slime leaking from his skin, as Tommy had no problem asking.

Charlie explained it as his 'goop' but Quackity better explained it as 'ectoplasm'. Neither was sure why it was there. At first, Quackity had thought it was because he was interacting

with the physical world, but Ranboo had made that a clear no as he had no slime himself. He then made a guess that it could be from how old the ghost was. If that was the case, then Ranboo dreaded that.

He couldn't imagine having the gross green goop all over his body, regardless of if he could feel or not. Charlie also seemed to be... a little confusing. Almost as if he didn't understand what he was saying but confident at the same time.

He hoped that it wasn't a side effect of age in ghosts.. Just another reason to get his life back.

"Anyway." Quackity said once they had all settled down. "Is there anything else I can help you with? I know it must be pretty nerve wracking being a new ghost, especially so young."

"Actually," Tubbo spoke for him. "We have a question." Quackity raised an eyebrow, smiling slightly to encourage the question.

"Is there a way to bring people back to life." Quackity paused as his smile dropped, staring from Tubbo to Ranboo.

"Ranboo, that's not.." The older man struggled to find his words. He didn't sound angry, but slightly panicked. As if he knew anything about death. *Really* knew anything. You can study it all you like, but you would never know the dreaded vastness that is death.

"Listen." He took a breath. "Everyone dies."

"And that's why we came to you," Tommy said. "You have to know a way to reverse it."

"Everyone dies." Quackity repeated. "You can't change it; even if you think it's unfair, and shouldn't have happened at a certain time or in a certain way." He spoke slowly, making sure the boys listened.

“You’re not answering the question.” Tommy pressed.

“Bringing someone back would only push back the inevitable.”

“Is it possible?” Ranboo asked, hoping that Tommy and Tubbo were able to hear it as well.

Quackity’s eyes were dark as they looked almost emotionlessly to the side. His lips pressed to a thin line. “Maybe.”

“Maybe? Do you have any idea of how?” Tommy’s tone earned a sharp glare from Quackity.

“Well, I’ve never tried something so *stupid* before. So not at the moment,” he snapped back. The pressure on the ‘stupid’ held more bite than Ranboo was currently accustomed to though it was not foreign. Ranboo knew Quackity only meant well, but he still couldn’t help but have trouble distinguishing his worry for irritation.

“Death!” Charlie exclaimed, clasp his hands together as if he’d found the solution for world peace.

“No, we’re trying to do the opposite of that. Thanks, though.” Tubbo awkwardly laughed. Quackity had his hand up to his face in frustration.

Quackity’s hand fell down his cheek and back onto his knee. “No. He means Death. Like, Grim Reaper.”

“You know how we can contact the Grim Reaper?!”

“No one has ever really met Death outside of well.. death. But I imagine it’d be similar to any ritual. The simplest being just getting some candles and sitting in a dark place. Pray to it maybe.”

“If I were you, I’d act super miserable and sit in a cemetery.” Charlie said, as Quackity nodded along.

“But there’s definitely no guarantee. It really depends on if it’s interested in you. But that’s probably not what you want from anything called Death.”

Ranboo nodded. Clearly, Quackity wasn’t thrilled with them contacting Death. But this is what he wanted, right? A chance to start over. It was part of their deal. He *couldn’t* back out now.

A ringing came from Tommy’s pocket.

“Shit, it’s Wil.” He groaned. “We gotta go.”

They all quickly stood, saying their goodbyes. Tubbo hugged Quackity again as Tommy took the cube back out, turning towards Ranboo’s transparent body.

“And Ranboo-“ Quackity interrupted. “If it’s not what you want, just try to accept it, okay?” He nodded.

He’d have to accept it. There’d be nothing else to do. He’d probably have all eternity to accept it if it didn’t work out.

The last thing Ranboo heard before being sucked back into the empty void of the cube was Quackity’s voice, phrasing a question much more like a statement.

“Death is inevitable. Do you really want to die a second time?”

Tommy rushed out of the tent, dragging Tubbo behind. Wilbur was still spamming his phone with calls. If they didn't find him soon he'd probably end up calling the police or something.

The carnival seemed to have even less people in it than it had before, surprisingly. It wasn't like there were many people to begin with anyway. It was colder than it had been when they first entered. Chill wind nipped at their noses and uncovered arms.

He scanned the area for Wil. Instead of his older brother, his eyes landed on someone very different.

"Shit, is that Dream?" Tubbo said for him. Standing in front of a rotting stall, throwing colorful rings over glass bottles, was the Dream Team. George was practically leant over the stall, Dream and Sapnap at his side watching as he played the game.

Before Tubbo could convince him otherwise, Tommy walked with confidence over to the trio, ignoring Tubbo's hand as the boy tried to pull him back.

"Hey, dickhead." Tommy greeted Dream with a smirk.

"Tommy." Dreams' eyes didn't move from the game in front of him, instead watching as George tossed another red ring, missing a bottle entirely.

"What're you doin playing a kids game?"

"IT'S NOT A KIDS GAME." George got defensive, followed by Sapnap's chuckle. "He's got an addiction." "I DO NOT."

Beside him, Tubbo was not impressed, his arms crossed in annoyance yet Tommy only pushed further. "Well, while you guys were fucking around, *we* did some actual ghost hunting."

“Okay, Tommy.” The emotionless tone to Dream’s voice sent goosebumps up Tommy’s arms. “We’re actually here because ghosts like to hang around carnivals, apparently.”

“Ooohhh, that’s really interesting.” Tommy nodded along. “Didn’t think about that. Where else do you guys like to hunt? Any place in particular?”

“Next Saturday we’re going to that burnt up general store in South L’manburg.” George stated with enthusiasm, not taking his eyes off the game. “By Wallace St.?” “That’s the one!”

“George, what the fuck??” Dream groaned. “You don’t just- whatever. Can you just leave us alone.” The way he phrased it, it wasn’t a question.

As the two boys turned to leave, Dream added, “And don’t think about showing up. You’d regret it.” Tommy only scoffed, not bothering to properly reply.

He continued to scan for Wilbur, whispering so only Ranboo and Tubbo would hear, “We have our haunt scheduled.”

“Tommy, we are *not* going there.” Tubbo declined defiantly.

“It’s perfect. They’ll be hunting, they won’t know we’re there. It could be any ghost there to haunt them.”

“I dunno, I’ve been thinking..” Tommy sighed from his nose. “If they’re ghost hunters, who have hunted longer than we have, shouldn’t they be used to things like that?”

“They’re phonies, Tubs.” He corrected. “They’ll be in shock and won’t know what to do. They’re all fakes.” Tubbo nodded, obviously not believing him but not commenting on it anymore.

It only took them less than a minute of wandering about the practically empty carnival to find Wilbur again.

The older boy barreled into Tommy's side, laying a hand on his shoulder. "Where have you been?! I've called you at *least* ten times. You don't just straight up *leave* without telling me! What the fuck--"

"We got bored of you giving some random girl heart eyes. Already saw Tubbo's uncle. We can leave now." Wilbur took a long breath at that.

He dug through his pocket, pulling out something brown and white. "I couldn't get enough points for the big one, but here." Wilbur handed Tommy a smaller version of the cow he'd been looking at before.

He took it hesitantly. "What about that girl?"

"Eh, she left before I got it." Wilbur shrugged. "Plus, I don't think she'd appreciate a cow."

"Gee, thanks, Wil." Tommy rolled his eyes despite knowing that there were other prizes Wilbur could've chosen instead.

The drive back was uninteresting and boring. Surprisingly, Wilbur didn't bring up their disappearance again. He instead played music, louder than before, leaving no room for any conversations to be had. Tommy appreciated it.

After Tubbo was dropped off, they arrived back home.

Instead of the sounds of sizzling on a pan, there was a box of pizza's sitting on the kitchen counter. Phil always preferred home cooked meals to anything, so this was a pleasant surprise.

The two didn't have to wait for Phils, 'come get it' before sprinting over to get a slice. They shoved at each other, Tommy careful to not get any pizza on his cow.

"So, what were your fortunes?" Phil asked once they were sitting.

"He said we'd die in peace." Tommy quickly lied, cringing as the quick lie was awful. He probably should've thought through that.

Phil then asked how it was, and Tommy answered the best he could. Boring and bland. He'd expected Wilbur to add on with how he'd ditched him the first chance he got, but he didn't.

"I won Tommy a cow." Phil wrinkled his brow before Tommy pulled out the small brown and white cow from his pocket. "His name is Henry."

It was strange how Wilbur avoided mentioning what Tommy had done. Throughout the rest of the conversation, Tommy sat with anticipation, waiting for it to come up, but it never did.

Usually, Wilbur would be the first one to rat Tommy out and get him in trouble. The older boy seemed to almost find *joy* in it at times. Why was it any different now?

His hand brushed over his pocket, checking to make sure the metallic cube was still there. It was. His heart skipped a beat, realizing that Ranboo was still trapped inside, probably hating his guts.

But before he could go to his room, Phil interrupted him. "You have your homework done, Toms?" Tommy nearly groaned. Right. School. He'd have that tomorrow.

"We don't have homework on weekends."

"That's good. Just make sure everything's ready for tomorrow." Phil smiled, signaling that Tommy could now leave. And leave he did.

He scrambled to his room, shutting the door quietly. The cube slipped out of his pocket and he opened it for Ranboo.

After a second, a thin outline of a boy stood in his room. He was see through, but the more Ranboo used his ability, the more features Tommy was able to see. He could barely make out a wrinkled collared shirt, and tired eyes. If Tommy squinted, he could see his face a bit clearer. Ranboo looked younger than he first thought he would.

From what Tommy had seen from Charlie, Ranboo's appearance could get a lot clearer. When Charlie showed himself, he could see *color*. Only the faintest of transparency was left on him.

"Sorry about that." Tommy apologized. "Pizza distracted me, and--"

"You have school tomorrow?" Ranboo stopped him, his voice a little easier to understand than before.

"Yeah." He nodded. "Let me get through this week, we'll do the haunt Saturday, then right after we'll try to contact Death." Tommy listed out everything, hoping that sounded reasonable to the spirit. He was relieved to see Ranboo nod his head. "Yes, but what am I going to do while you're gone?" "What do you mean?"

"I can't go with you. I'd go *crazy* inside of that box."

"I don't see the problem then?" Tommy shrugged. "Just hang out here?" "I'll be so bored." He might've seen wrong, but he thought he could see an almost pouty face on Ranboo.

He thought for a moment, looking over his room before his eyes landed on his small TV. "I could leave the TV going for you. Practice touching things and you can change the channel." Tommy's eyes continued to wander the room. "I'll leave out some comics too!" He walked over to his shelf, pulling out a couple superhero comics.

“Thank you, Tommy.” Ranboo looked over the comics.

“Don’t worry about it. Maybe haunt Wilbur while you’re here.” He laughed.

“No.”

—

Tommy slept through the night, snoring softly and drooling onto his pillow. A dim night light illuminated part of the room in a yellow hue. It looked warm.

The world was quiet. No noisy bugs because of the cold. No loud footsteps stomping their way down the hall as he was accustomed to in the apartment. Only the noises of sleep coming from Tommy. There was nothing to distract himself from the thoughts racing through his mind. No sleep to escape to.

Everyone dies. An undeniable fact that comes with the honor of breath.

But this couldn’t be Ranboo’s time to die. He’d barely had any life to begin with, so going back would only right a wrong. Right?

Before the morning sun even crept in through the window, Tommy’s alarm woke him for school. Ranboo was ushered out because obviously, no one wants to be watched as they get dressed.

It’s been a few years since Ranboo had been to a real school. He hoped that Tommy’s school was better than his when he’d attended. His home was already much better than what Ranboo had ever had. At least his father was there and cared. Even Wilbur *cared*. It had felt much like a normal sibling argument, even if Ranboo had never had the chance to experience that.

He should have been used to this by now. But once Tommy had stepped onto the bus, Ranboo felt an unbearable sense of loneliness.

Ranboo looked blankly out of Tommy's bedroom window. The sun was just barely rising from behind rows of houses. The yard still had frost clinging to the grass.

The house was just as silent as it'd been that night. The door leading to the hallway was ajar. And he was alone-

He was alone.

He could... explore? What else is there to do?

Ranboo stepped out into the hallway, glancing around. Still no sounds came from anywhere.

"A mirror," Ranboo thought aloud to himself despite no one being able to hear even if they were in the same room.

Find a mirror, look at myself, practice being visible. He made a mental list of things he could accomplish.

He walked through the hallway, glancing over the photos of toddler Tommy and family portraits. He was fairly sure he saw a bathroom next to their kitchen. There would be a mirror in-

"Take one more step forward," The sound of a loud voice caught him off guard. *"I'll shoot-"*

Ranboo quietly peered from behind the end of the hallway. The television was on, to his relief- at least no one was currently being held at gunpoint. To his surprise and disappointment, someone was home.

Techno sat at the couch, clicking the remote. Instead of relaxing into the cushions, he sat upright and straight. It looked uncomfortable.

He relaxed, stepping into the room. It would be weird to find the mirror now, right? What if Techno walked into a ghost staring at themselves in his bathroom mirror?

Instead, Ranboo stood behind the couch, looking at the black and white western movie Techno was watching.

Techno tensed- “Ranboo?”

Chapter End Notes

Rawr xD

Wow just reread this (i wrote this months ago) I’m just as surprised as you are. You probably aren’t surprised.

I guess ghosts are real???

Chapter Summary

Techno can NOT see ghosts, he's just cool.

Chapter Notes

I'M TRYING SO HARD TO WRITE THESE AAAAAAAAAAAAA

Have pity and patience plz <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Ranboo?” Techno looked behind the couch, his eyes not quite landing on Ranboo but they were close enough. If Ranboo was still living, he would probably be puking whatever food he’d had.

“I’m the only one here right now. You’re fine,” He reassured him and turned back around to watch the television.

Once Ranboo had recovered from the sudden fear, he spoke. “How did you know I was here?” Techno’s head swerved back around.

“Quackity taught you to talk??” Ranboo nodded though Techno couldn’t see. “Your voice is kind of.. soft and almost glitchy? But that certainly makes things easier- you talking without the spirit box I mean.” Techno still wasn’t able to look at Ranboo, but he didn’t expect him to be able to anyway.

“You’re cold,” Techno added. *Cold?*

Oh. Ranboo remembered, *My question.*

“I make the room cold?” He asked though he already knew. How else would Techno have known?

“Yeah. I got chills on my arms,” Techno held out his forearm for Ranboo to see. Ranboo cringed. Tommy slept in the same room as Ranboo was in. Why didn’t he say anything? He could’ve left the room. Oh no, Tommy was probably irritated, as he should be. Must’ve been awful to sleep in place so cold-

The TV flicked off and Techno rose to his feet, stretching out his arms and back. Ranboo watched as the man walked over to the kitchen just across the room and pulled out a pot.

“Do you cook, Ranboo?” The proper way to phrase that would’ve been ‘did you cook’ but Ranboo appreciated the idea that he still could.

“I usually just ate ramen or canned soup,” He answered, now standing behind the counter. Techno pulled out a few potatoes and carrots, setting them to the side as he went to another cabinet in search for something else.

“Sometimes I cooked eggs,” Ranboo added. That was true, though it’d been a while since he’d been able to. He did own a small, portable stove at some point. It hadn’t been the best but it allowed him to fry eggs until it inevitably broke down. Eggs were some of the best food he could’ve gotten. They were cheap and you got twelve in one carton. It was truly a loss when it stopped working.

Techno nodded along, “Would you like to help make some soup? Could help you practice interacting with objects.”

“Sure,” Ranboo smiled. The idea thrilled him. It was a relief that he wouldn’t be doing *nothing* all day, and Techno seemed very nice.

A knife was placed beside a wooden cutting board, along with a few carrots. Techno gestured to it. “You won’t be able to accidentally cut yourself, so that’s a plus.”

Ranboo laughed, “That’s the kind of positive thinking I need.” He reached for the knife, carefully holding it up before placing a carrot on the board. The objects were distantly cold, in a way he couldn’t quite describe. Almost like a phantom sense.

“We can’t trust Tommy with knives,” Techno was peeling a potato. Ranboo began cutting into the carrot, still listening to Techno intently. “We’ve all tried to give him *lessons* on how to use one.”

“He doesn’t know how??”

“He only cuts things *towards* his hand.”

“And he can’t change that?”

“Tommy’s stubborn.” Ranboo nodded. Tommy sounded stubborn. He sounded loud and assertive, definitely not the kind of person Ranboo would’ve been around before. Even now, could they be called friends? They’d made a deal. It wasn’t a ‘I’m doing this out of the kindness in my heart’ kind of thing. He did something for Tommy, and Tommy did something for him.

Still, Ranboo would like to imagine that in some life, they would’ve been friends without any conditions.

Ranboo continued to cut the carrot, slightly faster in an attempt to get his mind off of things that weren’t meant to be.

His heart jumped when the knife went to cut into his hand- he could imagine the pain of metal slicing into skin and the sting-

But it phased through. Of course it did. Even if he's been focusing on holding something with that hand, it wouldn't have hurt.

For once, Ranboo wished it did. Not because he wanted to hurt, but because that would be proof of life.

He sat the knife down on the counter with a click as the handle touched the marble.

Ranboo couldn't cry. Physically, he couldn't. All he was left with was an empty void of a brain, confused at what it should be doing. It felt like a nightmare. But this was worse than a nightmare; it was reality.

"Ranboo?" Techno began to speak but was interrupted by the front-door being opened. Phil shuffled inside with an armful of paper bags.

"Hey, Tech. Got some seasonings for the stew and you some more hair dye-" Phil stopped in his tracks, staring straight at Ranboo. "Who is this?"

Ranboo quickly glanced down at his hands, shocked at how they were visible-

Of course they were!! He'd been scared that he almost cut himself. They were visible *then* and he was visible *now*.

He looked at Phil in silence, unable to find an explanation.

"A ghost," Techno answered. He had walked over to Phil, taking the paper bags and setting them on the counter for him. He searched through one until he pulled out a jar filled with some kind of seasoning. "Thanks, Phil."

"You're welcome?" Phil glanced from where Ranboo once was, to Techno. Ranboo had quickly gone back to being invisible. That was embarrassing enough, thank you.

He stepped away, behind the counter. Techno wordlessly took the chopped carrots that Ranboo had cut, and slid them into the pot.

Phil was silent as well for a minute or two until he gathered his words. “So Tommy wasn’t lying?”

“Nope,” Techno replied, pouring sliced potatoes in the pot as well. Phil nodded, still looking unsure.

“Okay, then.” He then began to take the items he’d just brought in, which turned out to be mostly food, out of the bags to put them away.

So that was it? Phil just accepted the knowledge of spirits just like that. Ranboo would probably be having a crisis right now if he were Phil- hell, he was having a crisis anyway. The first day without Tommy, and Ranboo has already fucked up.

“Sorry if I interrupted anything, mate,” Phil *apologized* . For walking in on a ghost and his son chopping vegetables. What kind of parent is Phil?? Why couldn’t he have had a parent like that?

“Nah, it’s fine,” Techno brushed it off. “I was just telling Ranboo about Tommy’s inability to use a knife.”

“He’s really incapable of it,” Phil agreed.

“So it’s uh, Ranboo, then?” At first, he’d thought Phil had been referring to him as an ‘it’ and he wasn’t going to question him, but after a moment it was clear that Phil was directly talking to Ranboo and not Techno.

“Uh, yessir.”

Phil laughed and Ranboo panicked, believing he'd embarrassed himself further. "Never thought I would get a 'yessir' from a ghost- you don't need to call me that. Just Phil is fine," He smiled at Ranboo direction. "It's nice to meet you, Ranboo."

Techno continued standing by the pot, stirring it when needed. While he was busy, Phil sat on a kitchen stool, asking Ranboo questions not always relating to being a ghost.

"So, how old are you?"

"Eighteen." Ranboo had nearly answered sixteen, though he'd caught himself just before. Phil's face contorted into confusion.

"You mean you died when you were eighteen, or you're actually eighteen?"

"I'm eighteen."

"He died last week," Techno explained.

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that," Phil apologized before laughing nervously, "I just always imagined ghosts as like.. these old Victorian era poltergeist kind of thing."

Ranboo couldn't help but laugh as well. "So you didn't believe in ghosts until now? Even with *Tommy* living here?"

"Well, Tommy's always been into weird stuff.." He glanced back at Techno before looking back to Ranboo, who had shown himself once again. "And Techno never stressed that he *actually thought* that ghosts were real."

“Correction, I *knew* ghosts were real,” Techno cut the stove off and turned back to Phil.

“And you still didn’t tell me??”

“Wasn’t that important.”

“What do you *mean* it wasn’t important?!”

Ranboo was content to listen to the two ramble and ‘fight’ in the same way that Tommy and Tubbo did. It was entertaining and felt *right*. It felt light where other fights he’d grown up seeing were scary and stress inducing.

He listened to them talk for hours. They switched from arguing to watching TV as the soup cooled. He sat with them as they ate and was even pulled into conversation many times.

He was asked more things about himself than he knew how to answer.

His favorite movie was The Princess Bride because it was the only movie he’d had at his Aunt's house that hadn’t been thrown away or snapped in half. He only got to watch it when his Aunt was out of the house.

His favorite time of the day was sunrise because he was never able to sleep in very long and it was calm. It was a peace he could sit through in silence and not have to worry about screams or angry adults. The air was chill, the sky was pale yellows and oranges, and it felt like the universe loved him.

And the thing he liked to do most was... what? As of his recent life, he did not know how to answer that even with the suggestions that Phil and Techno were giving. He never had *time* to do anything. Ranboo had always focused on surviving; he’d had no time to thrive.

It was nearly time for Tommy to come home, as Techno informed him. Both Phil and Techno had taken the *entire* day to get to know *him*. That was something he didn't feel right about. They were so kind to a stranger, dead or not, staying in their house. He felt like he should apologize, but would he apologize for something he didn't choose?

"How will we tell Wilbur?" Techno asked. That was definitely something that Ranboo had forgotten about. Wilbur *hated* ghosts, right? Or at least the idea of them. Would it shatter his world to be told they were real?

"Tell him nicely and then introduce them?" Phil sounded unsure. "It's not *ghosts* that he doesn't like, Techno. You know that, right?"

Techno nodded, looking over at Ranboo who felt as though he was intruding on a sensitive topic. "Wilbur wouldn't hate you, or react too badly," Techno carefully explained and reassured Ranboo. "He hates the world, and that makes him worry."

Ranboo nearly asked what happened to make him feel that way, but was thankfully interrupted by the door opening and Tommy- "I'M HOME, DICKHEADS- WHY ARE YOU TALKING TO MY FATHER-"

"There's stew on the stove if you're hungry," Techno ignored Tommy's outburst.

Tubbo slid inside, nudging Tommy out of the way. "Get out of my way, I need Techno's stew."

"He *ONLY* uses potatoes!! By then you can't even call it a stew, it's just a pot of potatoes." Tommy dropped his backpack on the floor and closed the door.

"It's GOOD potatoes." Tubbo got a bowl from the cabinet and went over to the stove.

"There's carrots in there this time too."

“FUCK YEAH!”

“You had *one* job while we were gone, Boob boy,” Tommy crossed his arms. “And you immediately began to insert yourself into my family.” Ranboo could not tell if he was serious.

No one spoke, waiting for Ranboo to realize he was meant to respond. When he came to the realization, he fumbled with his words. “Well uh, you left the worst movie I’ve ever seen, on your TV. I simply could not watch it all day.” Being honest, Ranboo didn’t actually watch any of it, so he wouldn’t know how good it was.

Tommy gasped, “You motherfucker. It’s called UP and it’s a masterpiece.” He flipped Ranboo off before going over to fix himself a bowl of stew.

The others rambled on to each other, arguing or just talking while Ranboo questioned himself. Was Tommy truly upset with him? The way he’d responded certainly did not feel natural but it didn’t feel wrong either.

He didn’t know how to word his feelings. Content? Was that right? Or pleased. Was Ranboo pleased that Tommy felt like he could treat Ranboo the same as he treated Tubbo; angrily with no actual bite?

Or maybe Ranboo was wrong and Tommy really was upset with him. After all, he did not belong. They joked and he did not fit anywhere between the laughter.

—

The universe watched. They do not feel the need to quicken the players pace. In a world where time is meaningless, it makes no sense to rush.

The universe loves the player. They are not where their journey will end, but they are quite close.

The universe is proud of the player. They have come very far, and suffered many unpleasant and painful endeavors. Yes. They have come so far, and struggled for so long. Yet they carry on.

The universe is kind. They know the player and the player knows them even if they are not aware. They have seen the player as they struggled, and have heard the player as they weeped and as they prayed.

The universe waits to collect the player. The player is not ready yet.

The player is confused, but they have all of the time they need to understand, because time is meaningless and they are destined to progress.

The universe waits.

Chapter End Notes

THAT ENDING- I'VE BEEN WAITING TO SHARE THIS CHAPTER ENDING FOR SO LOOOONNNNG.

Sad boy time

Chapter Summary

Wilbur finds out there's a dead house guest. I think he reacts as anyone would *shrug*

Chapter Notes

LOLOLOLOLOLOL

TW: nothin

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

No one seemed to want to introduce Wilbur to their new house guest. At some point, they would have to. It's not very moral to keep such a big secret away from a household member, but Ranboo certainly isn't going to be the one to do it.

He's sure they'll tell him soon. Hopefully while Ranboo is *not* in the room, but that may turn out to be awkward for them if Wilbur chooses not to believe.

Ranboo sat on the side of Tommy's bed, his eyes lazily watching cars drive by. It was still early enough in the morning for frost to be sticking to the grass. For a second, it looked like snow.

If he were alive- which is a term he's been trying not to use as to not get his hopes up- his back would surely be sore right now. Sitting in one place for hours would put a strain on his back, but now, he feels nothing.

"Expect more snowfall between four and five in the morning, followed by mostly cloudy-"
Ranboo hardly listened to the tv broadcast coming from Tommy's TV. It wasn't interesting.

Why should he be excited for snow? He could never feel it.

One day, maybe.

He wandered out of the room and into the living room. It was for certain that he was completely alone now. Nobody else was there.

“Great. What now?” And here he was, talking to himself. He paused in embarrassed self reflection.

His eyes landed on the full sink and slightly ajar dishwasher past the kitchen counter. “They’d appreciate that, and it’s something to do...” He ignored his rambles to himself.

Talking to yourself has always been seen as a sign of insanity. Maybe he *is* insane, but he certainly has worse problems at the moment.

Ranboo switched the tv on, turning the volume down just enough to where he could hear it from the kitchen so that he would have some noise. Noise always seemed to help motivate him to do things. Even whilst he lived with his aunt, he had wired earbuds that hardly worked out of one side, but he used them all the time.

With that settled, he got to work.

Grab a plate.

Place a plate.

Grab a plate.

Place a plate.

Grab a cup.

Place a cup.

Grab a cup-

Creak

He turns around quickly, hoping to see either Phil or Techno.

Ranboo froze.

It was not Phil nor Techno, but Wilbur. Thankfully, Ranboo had set the plate he'd been holding down. Wilbur walked in, sighing as he hung his coat on the coat rack. Ranboo watched as silently as he could despite Wilbur not being able to hear him anyway.

As Wilbur walked off, Ranboo noticed that he walked past both his own bedroom and the bathroom. Curiosity got the better of him, and he followed him.

Should Ranboo have felt bad about stalking someone? Yes, and some part of him did. But all guilt was quickly thrown aside when he entered Tommy's room. What could he possibly want with anything in Tommy's room? Wasn't that an invasion of Tommy's privacy?

Wilbur's face was contorted into something Ranboo could easily recognize as frustration. By the way he warily looked around, Wilbur obviously knew he wasn't meant to be there. And yet, he carried on, looking through drawers and under the bed. Ranboo stood in the doorway, nervously watching as if he could do anything about *anything*.

Eventually, Wilbur pulled a little object out from under Tommy's bed, something he'd seen Tommy place. The light box.

What would Wilbur want with that? Didn't he hate ghosts?

Wilbur didn't stop there. He didn't stop looking until he had a little pile of ghost hunting supplies, even something as simple as *flashlights* sitting on the bed. Even then, he pulled

Tommy's wooden desk chair out to search the shelf above his closet.

Ranboo instinctively tried to suck in a breath, but very obviously, couldn't. He knew exactly what was up there. If Wilbur got the ghost cube, what would he do? Destroy it? Would that mean Ranboo had little to no chance of leaving the house?

His nervous hands squeezed each other as he silently panicked. Wilbur's hand searched the shelf and there was nothing Ranboo could do to stop him from getting the ghost cube. Unless...?

Ranboo panicked, concentrating on letting his foot collide with the floor below him until it made a soft *thud*.

Wilbur turned around quickly, muttering out an apology before he slipped. In an effort to keep himself upright, he gripped the shelf, only to bring down a pile of stored away blankets and sheets with him.

Ranboo yelped, leaning forward to catch him but was hit by a white sheet, blocking his vision.

And quiet. Ranboo stayed still, in a near crouched position, his arms outstretched slightly and with the sheet covering his body.

Neither boy made a sound.

If Ranboo had a heart, it would be beating out of his chest.

It was only when he heard a soft gasp did he come to his senses. He could see just barely out of the thin fabric. Wilbur sat knelt in a pile of blankets.

“Hi-” Wilbur interrupted him with a scream. The thuds of his feet were the very next sound Ranboo heard as Wilbur sprinted through the house.

“Wait- I’m sorry!” Ranboo chased after him, probably not the best decision, but it’s the one he made. The sheet waved around as he ran, but it stayed on. He thought about kicking the sheet off and hiding forever, but he’d have to deal with the problem he just created. At least the sheet created a sense of protection (not that he needs that anymore), rather than his bare face.

Instead of running out of the door as Ranboo had guessed Wilbur would do, he ran straight for the kitchen.

“BACK THE FUCK UP!” Wilbur held up a metal serving spoon in self defense. He glanced between the floating sheet and his phone laying on the counter, though he didn’t make a move towards it. “Who are you- WHAT are you?! Why are you floating??” Ranboo looked down towards his feet then back at Wilbur.

“I’m Ranboo,” He choked out.

Wilbur waited for a moment before he waved the spoon and raised an eyebrow. Oh yeah, there was more than one question.

Ranboo did *not* want to be the one explaining this. He’d much rather sit invisible in the corner as anyone else sit Wilbur down to calmly explain it, because Ranboo’s communication skills are shit. He’s shit. Everything’s shit.

But in the end, this was Ranboo’s problem. It was something he had to deal with, therefore he should be the one to explain to the ghost hating guy who’s house he’s staying in what’s happening. No matter how much he hates it.

“I’m dead.”

The door creaked open. “Wil, I didn’t know you were getting home so-” Phil stopped to take in the scene.

Wilbur holding a big spoon in self defense as the very awkward and very *dead* house guest stands covered in a blanket.

Phil bursts into laughter. Wilbur’s expression turns sour and red.

“It’s fine, mate.” Phil walked towards Ranboo, much to the dismay of Wilbur. He gently pulled the sheet off, revealing Ranboo’s unseeable self. “You wanna show yourself to Wil?”

“Not really..”

“Fair,” Phil shrugs.

“You’re fucking with me,” Wilbur stairs at the empty space where Ranboo was. “Ghost can’t be... *aren’t* real.”

“Put down the spoon and I’ll explain,” Phil held back laughter.

—

“And out of the three- technically *four* of you, no one thought to tell me this?” Phil had explained the predicament fairly quickly. Wilbur had insisted Ranboo put the sheet back on if he wasn’t going to show his face, which was something he could have done, but chose not to. No, Ranboo wasn’t nervous. Being hidden just made things... easier? He wasn’t nervous.

So here Ranboo sat, slightly humiliated as the white sheet hung down to the floor.

Phil sighed, “That was my fault. I’m sorry.” He clasped his hands together as he leant over the dining table. “I should’ve told you sooner, but I guess I didn’t want to stress you out

anymore than you already are. And the whole situation is pretty damn stressful for me too.”

Wilbur looked between them and the TV which was still on and playing the news. “So... he’s just.. staying here now?”

Phil looked over to Ranboo. “I suppose? If that’s what you want Ranboo. We didn’t exactly *talk* about it.”

Well shit. He didn’t think that Phil would take the whole ‘I made a deal with your youngest son that could bring me back to life, which is probably the worst possible thing someone could morally do’ thing too well. So in response, Ranboo shrugged.

“There’s no way we’re living with a ghost.” Wilbur’s sudden refusal was almost a relief to Ranboo. “Bring him to a morgue or something- a graveyard!”

“No!” Phil shook his head. “We’re not leaving him somewhere.” Ranboo wasn’t big on being a part of conversations, but he feels that maybe he should be a part of this one. Not that Phil nor Wilbur cares.

“He’s *dead*, Phil. He must’ve done something stupid to die so early- how old is he? He can’t be any older than twenty from his voice.”

“Eighteen,” Phil answered calmly but clearly irritated. “If you two just talk, I’m sure you can find common ground-”

“This is only encouraging Tommy to hunt Ghosts even more.”

“He’s a *kid*, Wil. He’s going to do kid things.” Phil sounded exhausted, not wanting to snap out of frustration but wanting it to end. “If you can’t handle that, there’s no shame in seeing a therapist again.”

“He,” Wil pointed at Ranboo. “Lived his life. He’s dead. Tommy is a kid, and the more reckless things this asshole encourages him to do is going to kill Tommy too.”

They continued to argue, and Ranboo tried to tune them out. He couldn’t pretend like Wilbur’s words hadn’t upset him.

He lived his life. A pretty shitty one.

Was he really putting Tommy's life in danger?

Messing with unwritten laws and probably creating new sins would probably count as putting his life in danger.

The argument continued on until Ranboo couldn't keep up even if he tried. It reminds him of past arguments he's seen and played part in. Arguing for nothing. Hoping the other gives in.

"-the previously reported John Doe found dead in South L'manburg's apartment complex run by-" Ranboo turned to face the TV, watching as they played footage of his old home. Both Phil and Wilbur had gone quiet.

"-has went under investigation, proving that this John Doe had forged legal documents to disguise himself." Photos of himself came on screen. Tired eyes, bags underneath them, pale skin. He's ugly and pathetic, even then. Even now.

"We've managed to track down his previous residence to find out more about South L'manburgs John Doe."

It changed to a different scene. One he could never forget as he was never able to quite scrub the sight out of his mind. Faded yellow floral patterns coat the wall behind her. It wasn't always like that. Once, he believed it was white. By the lack of cracks and peeling wallpaper, they must be in the better looking part of the house. Everything else was trashed and falling apart. It always has been.

Standing directly in front of the camera, was the tired, wrinkled face of a woman. Her dark eyes and grayed hair were familiar to him. She wore a grimace as she always had, as if it were glued to her face from birth. She introduced herself as Ranboo's aunt.

"I've raised him since he was four," her voice was just as rough as he remembered, if not more. It seemed to fall apart just as the rest of her. *"He was gone for a few months before he was found."* Before his body was found.

"And what age was that?"

"Fifteen."

"So he was sixteen when he passed, correct?" He couldn't help but feel mocked as the recorder continued to ask questions, answers she clearly already knows. It was disgusting. Barely anything ever happened in South L'manburg, and when it did they did everything they could to get every detail. The same had to be true about the little town he grew up in. The listeners had to be eating this stuff up. So whatever else she was going to say, it was going to be known by all.

After the basic questions, she was asked to talk about how he was while he was alive. His aunt visibly teared up, but Ranboo knew better. *"I took him to so many professionals. Therapists, psychologists. But he was so violent."* She wiped away forced tears with her palm, sniffing a little.

Ranboo wished he could puke.

"I didn't want him to leave, he just did. But I felt a lot safer when he did. I just hope..." She swallowed, and what a privilege it was to be able to do that. *"I hope he's better now, wherever he is."*

He turned the TV off himself, the sheet laying on the floor behind him. He couldn't bring himself to watch anymore, or have any more of the *lies* spill from her ugly lips.

How funny it is that the only pain he could feel was the pain of his past, and that seemed a whole lot more than his heart troubles ever gave him.

“Ranboo?” He ignored Phil, making sure he was hidden from the world before leaving for Tommy’s room. Tommy’s room had become the only place he felt safe, despite not needing a space like that anymore.

The closet door was still wide open, a bundle of blankets strewn across the floor in front of it. Tommy’s ghost hunting supplies were still piled on the foot of his bed. Maybe he should’ve just let Wilbur take them.

He sat down in the closet, wanting nothing more than to sink down to hell.

It was a lie. How could they not know? He’d rather them never know of his identity. Let his life rot and have no one remember him than think of her as the victim.

He sat there for what must’ve been hours. He ignored the quiet voices from the kitchen. Not even Wilbur raised his voice any louder than that.

They must hate me, he thought. The only people to ever like me, hates me now.

Phil must now be agreeing with his son. They must be thinking of places to leave him. He doesn’t *want* to be left somewhere, forgotten, but it might be for the best.

At some point, the sun became dimmer and the squeaks of a bus’s breaks alerted him to Tommy coming home. Any other day before this, and he would’ve been excited. Finally not alone. Finally having someone to talk to. But now, seeing Tommy would mean that would think of Ranboo differently. He would see him as some crazed monster.

The agonizing minutes passed as the front door opened and closed. Tommy did not scream to announce his presence. In fact, Ranboo could hardly hear Tommy speak at all. Only quiet voices exchanged words from the kitchen. At this point, Ranboo wished he could leave. Yet he could not leave the building without help. No matter how hard he leant against the wall, it would not let him pass.

A soft knock surprised him. Why would they knock? It was *Tommy's* room and they couldn't see him anyway. "Ranboo?" Tommy slowly creaked the door open. "Are you in here-" He shivered, closing the door behind him and grabbing his coat. "Of course you're here. It's fucking freezing." Ranboo stayed silent, looking down despite Tommy not being able to see anyway.

Wordlessly, Tommy walked over to his piled ghost hunting supplies. He scoffed, picking them up and reorganizing them.

Tommy hadn't mentioned anything so far about the incident. Had he not been told? Or was he waiting to bring it up somehow. Either way, Tommy's presence hadn't brought what he thought it would. Tommy's contorted facial expression at needing to reorganize his supplies was strangely a comfort for Ranboo.

When Tommy was done, he sat down on the foot of his bed, his hands in his lap. "You know we don't believe any of that shit, right?"

Ranboo was startled. "What? And you waited all this time to tell me now?"

Tommy laughed, "Body language says it all. And, we've all seen our fair share of asshole 'guardians', yeah?"

A strange emotion stuck out. He felt... offended. "She wasn't..." No, asshole was definitely what she was. So why did it hurt to hear it? Why did he want to defend her?

After not being able to finish his sentence, he shrugged, "I don't know." Tommy stayed silent for a few more seconds, staring at the wall in thought.

"Did you know that I was adopted?"

"No?" Ranboo was surprised. Phil and Tommy looked so much alike- how could they *not* be related?

“Nope.” He popped the ‘p’. “Wil and I stayed in a couple houses together through the foster system. Got split a couple times, then ended up here.”

“So are any of you related?”

“Wil thinks we’re long lost brothers but I doubt it,” he laughed.

Ranboo never admired someone more until this moment. Tommy’s laugh and smile in a time and place where Ranboo expected anything but.

“Anyway,” Tommy continued. “My point is, out of any family, we’re the ones who know the fakers the best.”

“Thanks. I didn’t.. know how I was gonna convince you if you had believed her.”

Tommy scoffed, “I don’t trust random old ladies over friends, Ranboob.”

“We’re friends?”

He rolled his eyes. “Well, yeah? I would fucking think so.” Ranboo laughed. If Tommy still believed in him, then maybe this whole thing will still be bearable. He could deal with the hundreds of others, dancing at his grave as long as his real friends still loved him.

Tommy stood with a stretch. “Welp. Let’s go talk to Wil.” Shit.

Chapter End Notes

LMAOOOOOOOOO IM BACK? I'm almost done with exams so that's rad. Gonna get a joB soOoOoon but whateverrrr. I do NOT have chapter ten written.

Wanna know why I haven't posted in so long?? I've either been busy staying happy, dealing with friendships, or writing other stories that I KEEP COMING UP WITH EVEN THO I HAVE TWO STORIES ON HERE I NEED TO FINISH.

Anyway, I hope you enjoyed this chapter. I'm trying to write the next one.

Death is a Woman

Chapter Summary

Ranboo bonds with Wilbur

Chapter Notes

LOLOLOLOLOL IM BACK.

This chapter is good compared to the others (cuz I finally know how to keep my tenses in line) but it's still trash cuz I wrote all of this in one night. Also I haven't written for this fic since 2022 oh my GOD.

TW:

None :)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Oh my god.” Wilbur closes his eyes, rubbing at his temples. “So you’re telling me you went to that stranger’s house to kidnap a sixteen year olds ghost?”

“He said he was eighteen!” Tommy defends, crossing his arms.

Ranboo watches from behind Phil as Tommy and Wilbur banter. Talking to Wilbur isn’t quite as bad as he thought it would be, especially since the incident had somewhat settled between them and Wilbur’s attention is now solely on Tommy, giving Ranboo the extra time to soak in his new reality.

Now, with Techno having walked in while Ranboo was sulking in Tommy room, four people know his secret, his lie. He’s sixteen, not eighteen, and he’s a runaway. It really isn’t *that* big of a deal, except it could’ve gone a lot worse if they decided he *is* who his aunt had said he is- a terrible, abusive nephew.

For some odd reason, they trust him- which, what if he *did* have abusive tendencies and anger issues? They would be fucked right now since he can’t die twice-

“But now you know ghosts are real!”

“That doesn’t change the fact you walked into a strangers *home*-“

“Boys,” Phil silences them with a groan. “We did not bring Ranboo out here so you two could argue.”

The idea that they force Tommy to move him out crosses his mind. It *would* make sense. No one really wants a ghost in their house after all. But that would mean their deal would be shaken.

Ranboo still needs to get revenge on Dream for Tommy, and Tommy needs to help him get his body back. It’s his only hope.

“Are you forever stuck in those clothes?” Wilbur asks, taking Ranboo off guard.

Ranboo looks down at his transparent red uniform. “Oh, um, I think so. I can’t feel them.”

“C'mere.” Wilbur gestures for Ranboo to follow, casually walking towards his room. The other three don’t seem to mind, turning around to do their various activities except for Tommy who rolls his eyes and waves Ranboo away.

With sigh, or a ghost equivalent, Ranboo follows Wilbur, the man he once was terrified of even encountering.

For the first time, Ranboo enters the older man’s room. It’s extremely neat compared to Tommy’s. Everything is organized and nothing lies scattered on the floor. A guitar and electric keyboard stands in their respective places in the corner.

Wilbur digs through an equally organized closet. “You really can’t take those clothes off? You look like a sad 2000s horror movie character.”

Ranboo attempts to pick at his clothing. “No, I think it’s part of me now...” His fingers can’t even tell where the shirt ends and his skin starts. He can’t feel it.

A black and white striped sweater is thrown at him. He quickly catches it, finding the action easier and easier with each time he touches something.

“You can wear that? Like the sheet,” Wilbur suggests, closing the closet.

“I have to be constantly thinking about it or it’ll fall through me,” Ranboo explains, slipping the sweater on anyway. “So you *may* find it laying on the ground somewhere.”

“That’s fine.” Wilbur shrugs. “At least you’ll sometimes look less...” His eyes glance from Ranboo’s transparent body to whatever else he could find in the room. His lips hovers over the word ‘*dead*’. Ranboo knows it does. “Stressed.”

“Thank you,” Ranboo replies, his hand running over the soft fabric. He enjoys being able to feel things again. It’s just aggravating. He has to always concentrate so hard to do it.

It makes him appreciate it more, sure. He takes a moment longer than he would’ve before to trace his fingers over soft fabric or warm lamps. But he *hates* that he appreciates it more. Even with his old pain, he wants to go back to enjoying warmth without having to focus on it.

“I want you to know that I’m sorry for what I said,” Wilbur eventually says. “I still stand by what I say when Tommy shouldn’t have been there, but I’m glad it was you he met.”

“Seriously. Isn’t he scared of getting kidnapped?”

“He isn’t! He isn’t scared of being kidnapped, or mugged, or held hostage- he just...” Wilbur groans before falling onto his bed dramatically.

Wilbur stares at the ceiling as if it had wronged him, his eyes squinted and his brow furrowed. Ranboo slowly sits at the foot of the bed.

“Ranboo, you didn’t deserve what happened to you.”

“I mean, it was kind of my fault- I forgot- well didn’t *forget* I just didn’t have enough money to-“

“I mean with your Aunt,” Wilbur interrupts. “I mean, I was a foster kid. All three of us- Me, Techno and Tommy. We know when shitty people talk bullshit.”

Ranboo nods slowly as he understands. Foster care was something he’d been in a few times until he was inevitably put back in his Aunts care. It wasn’t terrible compared to her- since mostly he was ignored- but each house was really a gamble.

He opens his mouth to continue his previous statement, that even what happened with his Aunt is *still* somewhat his fault. He can find himself at fault for everything that happens to him, even if it many entirely. If he’d been quieter or more helpful maybe nothing would’ve happened.

“And Phil adopted you?” Ranboo asks instead.

“He adopted me and Tech when we were ten. Tommy when he was eight.” Wilbur pats the bed beside him, motioning for Ranboo to lay back with him. He does, staring up at the blank ceiling.

“You know some people are just assholes, that’s what I’m getting at. And sometimes I feel like Tommy doesn’t know that,” Wilbur continues.

“Taking his ghost hunting gear away though?” Ranboo immediately regrets his statement, wishing to retract it. He definitely overstepped there.

“Yeah, please don’t tell him about that.” Wilbur doesn’t snap or get angry. Instead, he closes his eyes. “Can you just watch out for him? You’re a fucking *ghost*, man. You can protect him in ways I can’t, you know?”

“Of course,” Ranboo nods. “He saved me.”

Wilbur laughs. Ranboo isn’t sure why but he awkwardly chuckles along.

“Sorry, I’m an asshole,” Wilbur eventually explains. “He didn’t save you since you’re dead.”

It was Ranboo’s turn to genuinely laugh. “No he did! I can’t leave the buildings or areas that I’m placed in. He and Tubbo took me out.”

Wilbur nods as he thinks. “I bet a lot of ghosts are just... stuck places then, aren’t they?”

Ranboo doesn’t reply. He knows just as much as Wilbur does. But he guesses there *are* a lot of ghosts out there, just stuck in their death rooms. How many really do wander hospitals? Prisons?

He *wants* his body back, to experience his life fully of course. But it doesn’t really matter, does it? It doesn’t matter if he lives to the end of the day, the week, the year, he’ll inevitably end back where he is now.

“When I was nine, Techno and I had just arrived at Phil’s house as foster kids,” Wilbur starts. Ranboo listens closely. “I wasn’t really afraid of dying- not in the *wanting* to die way, but I hit and bit and swore at everything that moved. Techno was the same way, but quiet about it- clever about it.”

Wilbur sighs. “I was always afraid of Techno getting hurt though. I tackled Phil one time because he’d raised a hand to ruffle his hair. I got *better*, of course, but I don’t think it ever left me. I think instead of worrying about Techno, it’s Tommy now..”

Ranboo tilts his head towards Wilbur, expecting to see tears because that’s what he’d *imagine* would happen after admitting something like that to a stranger, but Wilbur still laid blank faced.

“I think Tommy’d like to hear that.”

“Probably,” Wilbur groans as he sits up. “He’s probably missing you. Let’s go.”

The rest of the day went smoothly. They spent the rest of the time they had in the afternoon talking about *anything* except the incident which Ranboo appreciates.

The atmosphere definitely feels more relaxed. He hadn’t yet seen the family talk so freely before- well... *before* was when everyone was hiding Ranboo from Wilbur.

Now, Phil happily cooks homemade pasta while Tommy rants to Ranboo about a spider documentary he’s constantly pausing. Tommy feels *strongly* about spiders.

The hours pass rather quickly. Ranboo constantly runs a hand down the sweater he was given, happy to be feeling something. It actually grounds him and as time goes on, he hardly has to think about it.

The family eats and not even then do they kick him out of the conversation. He may not be *able* to eat, but they don’t pretend he isn’t there. That didn’t even happen when he was alive.

The fact that he's dead does *not* stop Tommy from trying to feed him.

"You're all skin and bone!"

"I wish!" He groans as Tommy throws another meatball at his head. He *could* go invisible again but that would make the meatball get sauce on the floor and then Wilbur's sweater would fall on the ground and probably get dirty.

Tommy was also decidedly *not* delighted to find that no spaghetti sauce stuck to Ranboo because why would it?

Eventually, the day had to end and Ranboo followed Tommy back to his room. Ranboo had glanced at Wilbur, hoping that *maybe* he'd pull Tommy aside to explain what he'd told him, but he didn't. Of course he didn't. Ranboo is *very* good at the art of keeping things from those you should share it with. He can't be angry.

He waits in Tommy's room as he brushes his teeth and does *living* bedtime routines.

The door creaks open after he'd finished, announcing Tommy's presence back into the room.

"Tomorrows the day," Tommy says as he settles under the covers. Ranboo now notices how he uses multiple blankets to hide from the chill that Ranboo brings to the room.

"The day?"

"Saturday. You're gonna haunt Dream's *ass*." Tommy grins maniacally.

Right. He's supposed to haunt Dream, Sapnap, and George tomorrow at an abandoned store. He's *definitely* nervous for that, but that just means he's one step closer to getting his body back.

“What do... should I just move things around? Like their flashlights?” Ranboo asks, moving to sit on the floor.

“Nah, you have to do something *extreme*. Like, throw shit and break windows.” Tommy waves his hands excessively. “Then Tubbo and I will jump out and ‘catch’ you.”

Ranboo nods. They both sit to think about how the day might go- Tommy no doubt fantasizing about the fear on Dream’s masked face and Ranboo fearing about all the ways he could mess up.

“And then we’ll get my body?” He asks in a softer voice as if saying it too loudly would make it not possible.

“Hell yeah, big man. We’ll find a cemetery, light some candles, and *force* Death himself to give you your life back.”

“I think Death is a woman,” Ranboo replies. “She’s probably really elegant.”

“No, in literally every depiction ever Death is a guy.”

“You definitely haven’t seen every depiction ever then.”

Tommy grunts in reply. There’s movement in the bed as Tommy turns over, his back facing Ranboo.

He knows Tommy is tired, but Ranboo *can’t* be tired.

“I think maybe you and Wilbur should talk.”

Tommy's reply is a muffled questioning sound as his face is buried in a pillow.

"I dunno. I think it'd be good for both of you."

"If Wilbur wanted to talk to me, he would," Tommy mumbles before putting his face right back into the pillow. Ranboo keeps quiet after that.

Hours pass and Tommy is long asleep. His quiet snores fill the air and make Ranboo want to sleep even though he can't feel tired.

For the first time since his death, Ranboo's mind finally starts to quiet. It's no longer plagued with the constant buzzing anxiety he would experience even in life. He's calm. Nearly at peace.

Despite the odds, Ranboo's mind drifts.

Chapter End Notes

HOW MUCH PATIENCE DO YOU HAVE? DOES ANYONE EVEN REMEMBER THIS FIC? IS ANYONE HERE?

Literally so much has happened!! I became a section leader, got a bf, dumped said bf cuz I know I'm aroace now and it made me uncomfy, graduated, and now I'm about to attend college...

And I'm right back at a goddamn ghost fic about minecraft men. It all comes back to where it started babyyyyyy.

Haunting is harder when the person you're haunting is laughing in your face

Chapter Summary

Ranboo finally haunts Dream team. Basically, benchtrio fuck around and find out lmao

Chapter Notes

Back again with an unbetaed and unedited chapter! I have a beta, I just don't ask them to read this one because I started writing this before they became my beta.

TW:

Nothing. Lmk if I'm wrong, as always.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Ranboo opens his eyes. He's immediately hit with the vague memory of a white room- not a *room*, but an area. Everything was nothing because that's what it was: nothing. As a ghost, he's experienced *nothing* except for the *somethings* around him. He may not be able to feel if something's there, but he knows it is. In that place, there really was nothing.

Oh. He was... asleep. He'd fallen asleep as a *ghost*.

If that was a dream then that was the *strangest* dream he'd ever had. And like a dream, it passed rather quickly. Nothing happened. The rather peaceful space soothes his mind and in turn, makes him the most calm he's been in a while.

Yet while he's 'awake', the memory of it does anything but soothe him. Perhaps he had that dream because he's dead. He shouldn't be able to sleep, or at least he doesn't think he should be, so perhaps that state is something that isn't *dreaming*. What that would make it, he has no idea.

“Ranboo?” He’s jolted back to reality by Tommy. The other boy is already up and dressed, his red shirt covered by a black jacket. His hair is also brushed but the unruly curls are already sticking back up. He sends down an unimpressed, even irritated look in Ranboo’s general direction as he’s still invisible.

“Oh my god- Tommy, I can sleep!” Ranboo makes himself visible to Tommy again, lifting the sweater Wilbur had given him and slipping it on while he was at it.

“*That’s* what you were doing?” Tommy crosses his arms. “I thought you’d ran away or something. I yelled for you for like... twenty minutes.”

“You couldn’t... *tell* I was here?” Ranboo says, referring to the chill he brings to the room.

“It was like you’d literally *left*, man. I swear you weren’t here.”

“And your first thought was that I somehow escaped the house?” Ranboo sighs, causing Tommy’s annoyance to drop and his defense to rise.

“Well, I *also* had the idea that maybe you’d like... finally gone to hell.”

“What?! Why would I be in *hell*?” He’s cut off by Tommy loudly clearing his throat as he starts fumbling through his bag for the ghost cube. When he finds it, he holds it out with a shit eating grin.

“Ready to prank a bitch?”

The ghost cube is about as pleasant as the other times Ranboo had spent inside it: dark. Now, he’s more or less used to the somber blackness, seemingly floating in space. Though, it does feel much like a rollercoaster, being knocked around with Tommy’s body– and Ranboo comes to the conclusion that Tommy has no clue how to walk sensibly.

Even with Ranboo's late awakening, they were up and out of the house before Wilbur, which saves them time in arguing. Although Wilbur had asked Ranboo to keep Tommy safe, he doubts that the older brother would be fond of Tommy running off on another ghost hunting expedition so soon.

That only means that Ranboo has more of a job to do. Keep Tommy (and of course Tubbo) safe. He could do that. Once he's out of the cube, that is.

"Tommy!" Tubbo's voice echoes through the cube.

"You've got Ranboo?" Tubbo says, now much louder than before.

"Yep," Tommy replies. *Finally*, he stops walking to greet Tubbo, giving Ranboo a moment to stop spinning in his bodiless void.

"Well? Are you excited, Ranboo?!" Tubbo's voice shakes the cube, his words bouncing and ringing through Ranboo's ears.

"yeah," Ranboo chokes out once he's recovered.

"Wait- can he hear me?"

"Maybe? Maybe we just can't hear him."

"Let's just go!" Ranboo groans. Of course, they don't hear him, but he can feel the cube moving soon after.

They walk for a while, Tubbo and Tommy talking over the plan or just conversing about ghost hunting in general. At some point, Ranboo tunes them out. The cube isn't fun and he doesn't want to be in there longer than he has to. He can't wait to actually *walk* again, preferably in a body.

But the long walk does give him time to think through the plan. His job is to throw and break things and to scare Dream and his friends. Tommy and Tubbo would then barge inside, 'capture him', and Dream will most likely keel over from embarrassment. Or, at least, that's how Tommy put it.

He's suddenly jolted as Tommy more than likely dives for something.

"They're inside!" Tommy exclaims.

"I really hope you went over the plan with Ranboo," Tubbo nervously says.

"All he has to do is break some shit," Tommy retorts. The cube is moved again, lifted up. *"Are you ready, Ranboo?"*

"No." Ranboo shakes his head.

All he heard before the world turned bright was Tubbo's whisper, *"Good luck!"*

He enters a crumbling building. It's not like the rotting walls and creeping vines he would usually see while strolling across South L'manburg. It's freshly burnt. Black soot still sticks to the floors and walls but he can still make out the counter of the general store clear as day.

It's so eerily similar to the counter at the convenience store he worked at, though the counter is smaller and the now crumbling racks of merchandise are wooden, not metal. This isn't a branded store, this is most likely a family owned store.

He hopes no one died in the fire.

The window behind him is closed, though most of the glass is broken anyway. Tommy grins like a demon in disguise and Tubbo gives him a friendly thumbs up even though he cannot see him. Ranboo takes the first step further into the building.

“I don’t think there’s anything in here,” a voice from the other side of the store says. Ranboo walks carefully even though there’s no chance that they could hear him.

He pauses when he sees the three men. From Tommy and Tubbo’s description, he’s fairly certain who’s who. The shorter man is George, the one with bandana Sapnap, and the man with the horrendous porcelain mask is Dream.

“No one has actually died here in the last decade,” Sapnap continues, waving an EMF in front of him. “I really doubt there’s anything around.”

“This place has been around for way longer than a decade,” Dream retorts.

Ranboo makes his way around another crumbling shelf, looking to separate himself from Dream. Something about the man screams wrong— be it his mask, clearly only on him for media attention, or the sternness of his tone. He doesn’t sound happy to be there, not like Tommy and Tubbo.

He’s not hunting ghosts because he likes doing it.

“We just need *one*.” Dream crosses his arms. “If not here, then we can head to-”

The EMF starts to beep loudly, shining a bright red.

Dream’s head cocks to the side. “See! We found one.”

Ranboo tries to take in a deep breath, once again finding no air entering his lungs.

Time to haunt.

Ranboo grabs at the closest object, an unrecognizable burnt box on one of the shelves, and tosses it. It splinters against the ground in a puff of black soot.

George squeals, jumping away from it. He nearly falls into the shelf, only being saved by Sapnap. Behind them, Dream pulls out a spirit box and moves to step in front of Sapnap and George. He'd also taken the EMF out of Sapnap's hands, holding it outward so he could be facing Ranboo.

"Hey, ghost, can you confirm you're here?" Dream says, a smile in his voice. Ranboo presses his lips thin. Dream isn't fazed.

Ranboo isn't here to chat, but he can definitely use this to his advantage.

DIE.

His voice comes out as static and much raspier than his normal voice. He cringes at it, remembering how his voice used to be before he learnt how to speak again.

Once again, Dream isn't scared.

"Perfect! A violent one," Dream exclaims. Behind him George's eyes widened. Dream takes a step forward, towards Ranboo, so Ranboo takes a step back. He remembers how Tommy had cornered him, so he takes another step, away from the wall.

“I know all you want is to be left alone,” Dream continues to walk, Ranboo avoiding him throughout the aisles. Dream’s mask never leaves him, *knowing* he’s there thanks to the EMF, but Ranboo has to double check that he can’t see him– which he can’t. Ranboo is very much invisible to him right now.

“But I have a *deal* I would like to discuss.” The man keeps speeding up. Ranboo struggles to keep ahead.

Ranboo– in a panic– grabs at a shelf, pulling it towards them so that Dream has to scramble to not be crushed. The shelf simply goes through Ranboo, though he shields his eyes anyway.

“Dream!” George calls out, running towards his friend. He helps Dream to stand.

Once standing, Dream straightens his mask. He then holds out the EMF. It glows yellow until he takes another step forward. It’s close enough now to glow red again.

With a chuckle, Dream says, “As I was saying, I want to make a deal.”

NOPE.

Ranboo turns away, looking for Tommy and Tubbo through the window again, but he can’t find them. Surely they could hear how badly this is going and would come in to save him.

He puts his hands against the broken glass, the invisible barrier keeping him locked inside pushes against him. He can’t find Tommy or Tubbo anywhere.

“We’ll leave you alone,” Dream negotiates. He’s closer now, following Ranboo with the EMF. “You’re going to help us either way.”

LEAVE ME ALONE.

His fake voice comes out of the spirit box as crackly and sinister but the truth couldn't be any more different. He doesn't feel *safe*— even if he is a ghost and is incapable of being hurt anymore.

Ranboo throws whatever he can, cups and various metal boxes off of the counter. He even lifts part of the cash register, shoving it off. It works wonders to Keep George away, but Dream seems to *love it*. It seems that Dream had been looking for a violent ghost.

The shelf had been a split decision fluke. Ranboo didn't want to actually hurt Dream, and so he wouldn't throw anything to actually hit him. Dream probably reads right through him. He's calling his bluff.

Dream steps behind the counter. Ranboo cornered himself.

“You sure you don't want to make a deal?”

YEP.

Dream stops walking, the EMF inches from Ranboo's chest.

“Pity.”

Ranboo turns to slide over the counter but runs right into a familiar object in Sapnaps hand as the man leans over the counter.

Ranboo screams as he's sucked into a ghostcube.

“Tommy– you *just* got ungrounded,” Wilbur says as he drags both Tommy and Tubbo by their arms. “You have no business going to another abandoned building– in *South L’manburg*, of all places– the place was just a pile of burnt wood for fucks sake!”

“We weren’t ghost hunting!” Tommy defends.

“We need to go back, Wil,” Tubbo says quickly. They’ve been trying to convince Wilbur to let them go back, but neither wanted to explain what they were actually *doing*. Ranboo hasn’t been brought up because both boys fear that Wilbur will know exactly what they were doing– practically harassing their bullies.

“*Why?*” Wilbur snaps, glancing back at them before continuing on. “You keep *saying* that but you won’t tell me why!”

“It’s *really* important, Wilbur,” Tommy pleads. Wilbur falters, even if it’s just for a moment. Tommy never pleads.

Ranboo’s probably terrified right now. Knowing the boy, he’s anxious beyond belief having to stall that long. Tommy just barely heard him start to throw things before Wilbur showed up to drag them back home.

“If you can’t tell me, it can’t be that important–”

“Dammit, Wil!” Tommy shouts. “Trust me! Just *trust* me!” Wilbur stops walking.

“I am sixteen,” Tommy continues. “I know how to call you– I know how to call the *police*! Let me do my own shit!”

“I just want to protect you,” Wilbur says, letting go of their arms.

“We’re *always* doing things safely,” Tommy replies. “I know how to do things safely because of *you*. That’s all you had to do: teach me.”

Wilbur slowly moves his gaze down with the realization, somehow only just *now* hitting him.

Tubbo tugs at Tommy’s sleeve. “We *really* gotta go—”

“At least tell me *why*—”

Techno jogs up, taking only a second to catch his breath. “Where’s Ranboo?”

They freeze.

“Oh my god, Tommy,” Wilbur groans. “Where’s Ranboo.”

“He’s not in the house,” Techno continues. “And he can’t leave without your help. You do have him, right?”

Tommy presses his lips thin.

“If you did, what I think you did, you better not have,” Techno states firmly.

“He’s haunting Dream,” Tubbo answers.

Techno immediately groans, shoving his hands into his face. “Show me.”

Tommy and Tubbo quickly lead them back to the burnt general store, but find it empty. He catches how Wilbur visibly cringes as Tommy steps inside the building, the floorboards creaking under his boots. Tommy rolls his eyes.

They start to call for Ranboo, sticking their arms out to find any sign of cold air. Tommy pulls out the EMF, turning it on to search. It stays green.

“Tommy, where did you get the spirit cube?” Techno asks.

“Would you believe me if I said Amazon?”

Techno looks away and slowly nods to himself. “You got it from Dream– and you didn’t think they had *more than one*?”

“I didn’t think they went around capturing just any ghosts!”

“No, you didn’t *think*. Period,” Techno responds. Tommy freezes. This is the first time Techno’s ever gotten truly angry towards Tommy. He’s gotten frustrated with the dinner table banter and the arguments over which movie to watch, but never before has Techno’s face twisted to such anger.

Techno sighs, his face returning to something less terrifying. “I don’t trust Dream. We have to find him.”

“We can’t just file a police report over someone taking our friend who happens to be a ghost,” Wilbur adds.

“Nor can we break into his house.” Techno places a hand to his face in thought.

"I totally could," Tubbo responds. Techno gives him an unimpressed glare. "What? He'd never notice me."

"Okay, here's what we'll do." Techno clasps his hands. "I'll ask Dream about getting Ranboo back as bluntly as possible. If he refuses or pretends like he doesn't know what we're talking about, we'll see about sending Tubbo through his window."

"Fuck yeah!" Tubbo exclaims.

Chapter End Notes

Jupit3r_th3_al13n guessed exactly what was gonna happen 😭

We probably have like... one or two chapters left? I'm not entirely sure if I can fit the last bit into one full chapter but I can try. Ty all for stickin with me on this one!! <3

End Notes

Follow me on tumblr and twitter as GoldiesFlag, and let me know how this fic is goin! I love feedback.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!